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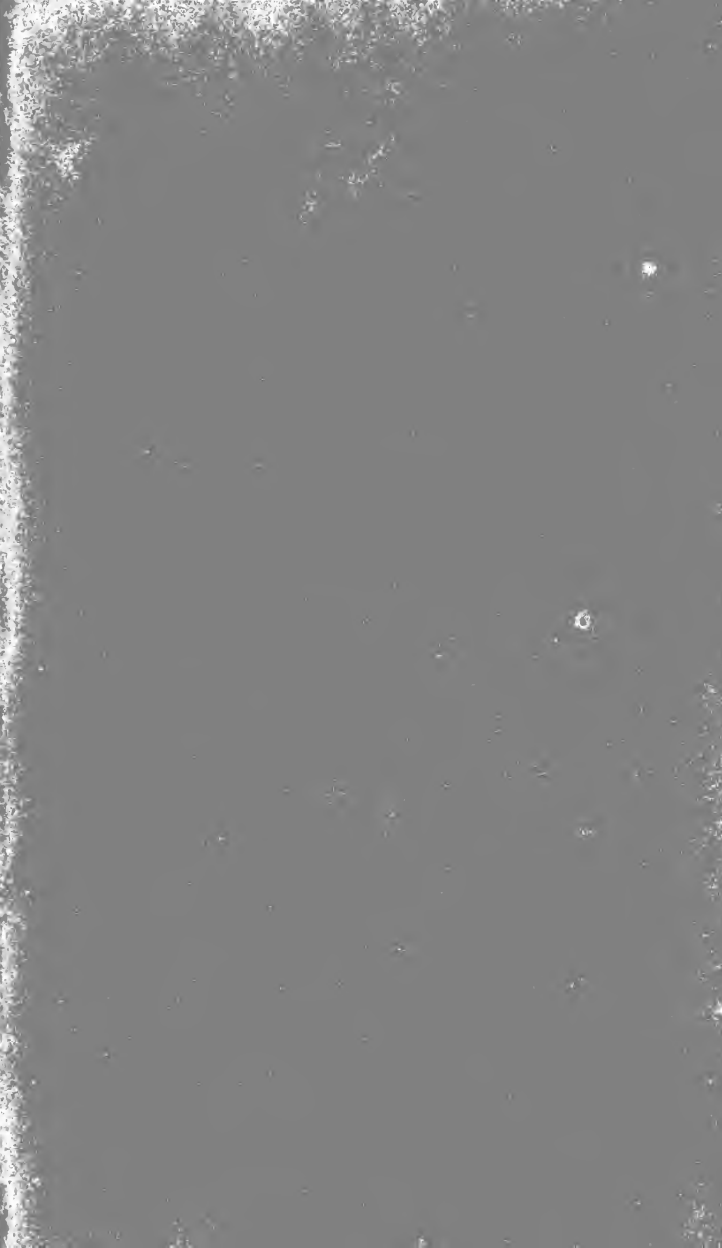


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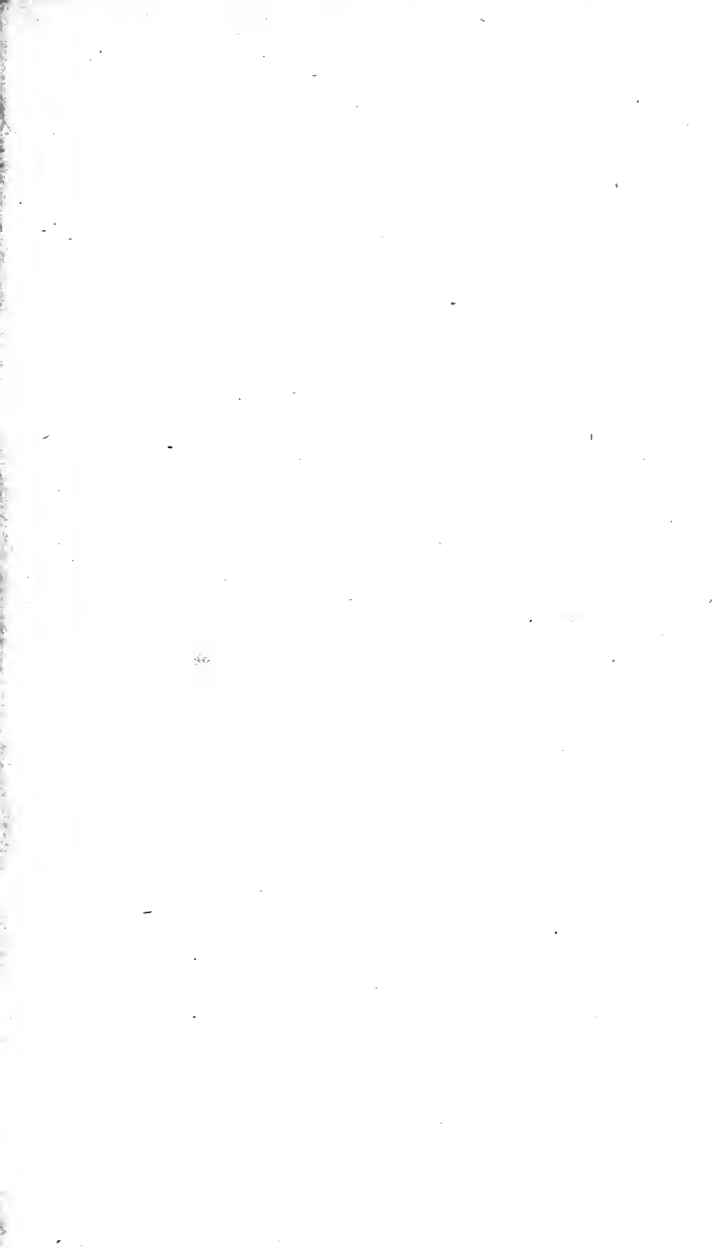


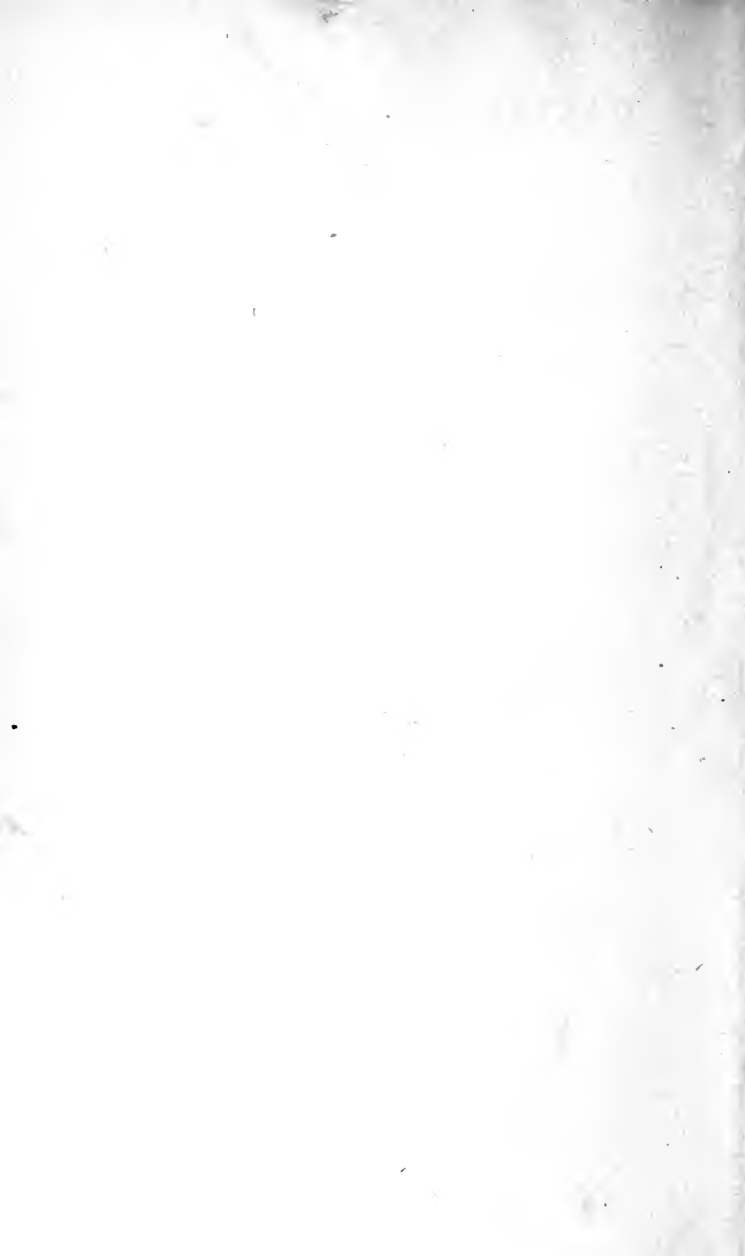






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# HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

BY ARCHIBALD ALISON, F.R.S.

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# HISTORY OF EUROPE.

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## CHAPTER LXXVIII.

CHARACTER OF NAPOLEON, MURAT, NEY, AND BERTHIER.

HISTORICAL narrative, how important or interesting soever the events may be which it embraces, is not the species of composition which gives the best insight into the character of the actors in the scenes it records. General causes are there too much wound up with personal agency ; the stream of human transaction is too vast, its floods too overwhelming, to permit the salient points of individual disposition to be adequately developed, even in those who have been chiefly instrumental in directing its current. It is private incident which portrays the real man : it is in the habits of domestic life that we are to seek the true touchstone both of the greatness and the weakness of humanity. The common maxim, that no man is a hero to his *valet de chambre*, indicates the universal concurrence of all ages in this truth. The characters in public life, accordingly, which are most deeply engraven on the memory of mankind, are not those by whom the most important changes in history have been wrought, but those of whom the most graphic and touching incidents have been recorded by writers of capacity sufficient to discern their value. The heroes of antiquity, after the lapse of two thousand years,

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1.

Importance  
of personal  
anecdote in  
the delineation  
of character.

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still seem present to our imagination ; but if we examine the elements of which the still living phantoms are composed, we shall find that, while their great and important exploits are recollected only in a sort of shadowy grandeur, it is the incidents of their private life, the generosity of their individual actions, which are really enshrined in our memory ; and that it is not so much even the pictured pages of Livy, Xenophon, and Quintus Curtius, as the lives of Plutarch, which have given them immortality. In modern times, it is the Richard III. and Henry VIII. of Shakspeare, not those of history, who recur to every mind when our kings of the olden time are thought of ; it is the Johnson of Boswell, not the author of the Rambler, or the learned lexicographer, who is present to every reader. And so feeble is the impression produced by real generalities, in comparison of fictitious details, that even the valour of Richard Cœur de Lion, the beauty of Queen Mary, and the tyranny of Louis XI. are retained in our recollection chiefly by the enchanting or powerful colours in which their characters have been drawn, by the imaginative pencils of Schiller and Sir Walter Scott.

2.  
Rich materials, in this respect, which exist regarding Napoleon.

Perhaps there is no illustrious man, ancient or modern, of whom such ample details exist in these respects as Napoleon ; and though they have been disfigured, in too many instances, by the enthusiastic partiality or interested flattery of one set of writers, and the coarse invective or profound hatred of another, yet it is not impossible for an attentive observer to distinguish the true from the false, even in these exaggerated statements. An experienced draughtsman has no difficulty in separating sketches from nature from imaginary conceptions, even of scenes which he has never himself visited ; and those who have made themselves familiar with the peculiar and strongly marked traits of that wonderful man's character, will seldom be at a loss to distinguish the real from the fictitious anecdotes which have been preserved concerning him. The reader, therefore, will probably not regret, nor deem the pains misplaced, if advantage is taken of the pause in military operations which resulted from the armistice of Pleswitz, to throw together some of the most graphic and characteristic details which

exist, furnished by eye-witnesses, of a man whose name will ever occupy the most conspicuous place in the annals of modern times.

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What renders the traits of Napoleon's character improbable, and at times almost incredible to an ordinary observer, is the opposite and apparently irreconcilable features of disposition to which they point. Those who are familiar, on the other hand, with the leading principles and ruling objects of his mind, and have arrived at the secret clue which reconciles its seeming inconsistencies, will regard them as in a peculiar manner characteristic, and find additional evidence of the authenticity of anecdotes descriptive of such a disposition, in the very variety which appears at first sight so perplexing. He united, to a degree which was perhaps never before equalled, the ardent and impassioned temperament of southern, with the cool judgment and intellectual force of northern Europe. It is hard to say whether he was most distinguished by the admirable knowledge which he possessed of the grand and elevated in human conduct, and by the heart-stirring use he could at all times make of appeals to the most generous feelings of our nature, or by the total disregard of every moral obligation or disinterested virtue, which he invariably displayed when his own interest appeared to be in any degree thwarted by a due observance of them. He was not by disposition a cruel, nor by nature a bad man; that is, the wicked principles of humanity were not in any extraordinary degree developed in his character. It was by the entire absence of any moral control, when his interest was concerned, that he was principally distinguished.

3.  
General character of Napoleon's mind.

Yet this absence did not by any means render his life a mere tissue of bad actions, nor was it inconsistent on many occasions with noble deeds, humane feelings, and beneficent intentions. He was too clear-sighted not to perceive that such conduct was, in the general case, the most judicious; he knew well that vindictive cruelty usually defeats its own object; and that the only solid foundation for the attachment of subjects to a sovereign, is to be found in a sedulous protection of their interests. But the grand and peculiar characteristic of his mind was, that all this was done, not because he felt it to be

4.  
Singular combination of good and bad qualities which he possessed.

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right, but because he saw it to be expedient: his ruling principle was interest invariably followed, not duty perseveringly performed. Accordingly, whenever he perceived, or thought he perceived, a conflict between these rules of conduct, he never hesitated an instant to give the preference to the selfish considerations—or rather, his mind was so entirely governed by their influence, that he never experienced, on such occasions, any mental conflict at all. He often said that Corneille was the only man who understood the art of government, and that, if he had lived in his age, he would have made him a privy councillor; <sup>1</sup> \* and the reason was, that while he thoroughly understood, and has nobly expressed, the most elevated sentiments, he always assigned the superior place to reasons of state policy—in other words, considerations of real or supposed expedience. This distinction, which never perhaps was so clearly defined in any human being before his time, furnishes the true key to the otherwise inexplicable character of Napoleon; and demonstrates that there is much truth, both in the obloquy which has been thrown upon him by his enemies, and the eulogies which have been pronounced on him by his friends.

<sup>1</sup> Las Cases, iv. 372. De Staël, Dix Ann. d'Exil. 102.

5.  
Clue which is afforded to his character by his bad qualities.

If we contemplate him in one point of view, never was any character recorded in history more worthy of universal detestation. We behold a single individual, for the purposes of his own ambition, consigning whole generations of men to an untimely grave, desolating every country of Europe by the whirlwind of conquest, and earning the support and attachment of his own subjects, by turning them loose to plunder and oppress all mankind. In the prosecution of these objects, we see him deterred by no difficulties, daunted by no dangers, bound by no treaties, restrained by no pity; regardless alike of private honour

\* Perhaps Napoleon had in view in this opinion the celebrated lines on the death of Pompey, of the Egyptian counsellor:—

“ La justice n'est pas une vertu d'état.  
Le choix des actions ou mauvaises ou bonnes  
Ne fait qu'anéantir la force des couronnes;  
Le droit des rois consiste à ne rien épargner;  
La timide équité détruit l'art de régner;  
Quand on craint d'être injuste, on a toujours à craindre;  
Et qui veut tout pouvoir doit oser tout enfreindre,  
Fuir comme un déshonneur la vertu qui le perd  
Et voler sans scrupule au crime qui le sert.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Corneille, Pompee, Act I. scene 1.

and public faith; prodigal at once of the blood of his people and the property of his enemies; indifferent equally to the execrations of other nations and the exhaustion of his own. We perceive a system of government at home based upon force, and resting upon selfishness, which supported religion only because it was useful, and spoke of justice only because it was expedient; which at once extinguished freedom and developed talent; which dried up the generous feelings by letting them wither in obscurity, and ruled mankind by the selfish, by affording these unbounded gratification. We see a man of consummate abilities, wielding unlimited powers for the purposes of individual advancement; straining national resources for the fostering of general corruption; destroying the hopes of future generations in the indulgence of the present; constantly speaking of disinterested virtue, and seldom practising it; perpetually appealing to the generous affections, and ever guided by the selfish; everlastingly condemning want of truth in others, yet daily promulgating falsehoods among his subjects, with as little hesitation as he discharged grape-shot among his enemies.\*

If we regard him in another view, we shall be led to form a very different estimate of his character. Never were talents of the highest order, genius of the most exalted kind, more profusely bestowed upon a human being, or worked out to greater purposes of good or evil. Gifted at once with a clear intellect, a vivid imagination, and a profound judgment—burning with the fervent passions and poetic glow of Italy, and yet guided by the highest reasoning and reflecting powers; at once an enthusiastic student of the exact sciences, and a powerful mover of the generous affections; imbued with the soul of eloquence, the glow of poetry, and the fire of imagination,—he yet knew how to make all these powers subservient to the directions of sagacious reason, and the dictates of

6.  
And his good  
and great  
qualities.

\* ——— “Sed non in Cæsare tantum  
Nomen erat, nec fama ducis; sed nescia virtus  
Stare loco; solusque pudor non vincere bello:  
Acer, et indomitus, quo spes, quoque ira vocasset,  
Ferre manum, et nunquam temerando parcere ferro;  
Successus urgere suos; instare favori  
Numinis; impellens quidquid sibi summa petenti  
Obstaret; gaudensque viam fecisse ruinâ.”—*Lucan. Phars.* l. 143.

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extensive observation. He was not merely illustrious on account of his vast military achievements, but of his varied and often salutary civil efforts. He was not a great man because he was a great general: he was a great general because he was a great man. The prodigious capacity and power of attention which he brought to bear on the direction of his campaigns, and which produced such astonishing results, were but a part of the general talents which he possessed, and which were not less conspicuous in every other department, whether of government or abstract thought. It was hard to say whether he was greatest in laying down strategetical plans for the general conduct of a campaign, or in seizing the proper direction of an attack on the field of battle, or in calculating the exact moment when his reserves could be most effectively employed. And those who are struck with astonishment at the immense information and just discrimination which he displayed at the council-board, and the varied and important public improvements which he set on foot in every part of his dominions, will form a most inadequate conception of his mind, unless they are at the same time familiar with the luminous and profound views which he threw out on the philosophy of politics, in the solitude of St Helena. Never was evinced a clearer proof of the truth which a practical acquaintance with men must probably have impressed upon every observer, that talent of the highest order is susceptible of any application; and that accident or Supreme direction alone determines whether its possessor is to become a Homer, a Bacon, or a Napoleon.

7.  
His general  
character.

It would require the observation of a Thucydides, directing the pencil of a Tacitus, to portray by a few touches such a character; and modern idiom, even in their hands, would probably have proved inadequate to the task. Equal to Alexander in military achievement, superior to Justinian in legal reformation, sometimes second only to Bacon in political sagacity, he possessed at the same time the inexhaustible resources of Hannibal, and the administrative powers of Cæsar. Enduring of fatigue, patient of hardship, unwearied in application, no difficulties could deter, no dangers daunt, no obstacles impede him; a constitution of iron, a mind superior to

physical suffering, enabled him to brave alike the sun of Egypt and the snows of Russia. Indefatigable in previous preparation, he was calm and collected in the moment of danger; often on horseback for eighteen hours together, and dictating almost the whole night to his secretaries, he found a brief period for slumber during the roar of the battle, when the enemy's balls were falling around him.\* Nor was peace a period of repose to his genius, nor the splendour of courts a season merely of relaxation. Though not insensible to their attractions, though often indulging for a moment in their vices, he was never the slave of their pleasures; female charms exerted only a transient sway over his passions, and never clouded his reason; and when surrounded by the pomp of a king of kings, he was unceasingly employed in conducting the thread of interminable negotiations, or stimulating the progress of beneficent undertakings.

"Has tantas viri virtutes ingentia vitia æquabant; inhumana crudelitas, perfidia plus quam Punica; nihil veri, nihil sancti, nullus deorum metus, nullum jusjurandum, nulla religio."<sup>†</sup>—Brave without being chivalrous; sometimes humane, seldom generous; vehement in anger, yet often forgiving on reflection; implacable in political hatred, but not insensible to hostile esteem; inexorable in general measures, yet susceptible of individual pity; wound up in his own elevation, yet ever identifying it with the glory of France; regardless alike of crime or suffering in the path of ambition, yet not addicted to either if uncalled for by private interest or state policy—he could at once call his conscripts food for cannon, and boast that he could afford to spend ten thousand of them a-day, and yet bind up the wounds of individual suffering, or sacrifice his carriages to wounded valour. In one

8.  
Mixed good  
and bad  
qualities of  
his character.  
<sup>1</sup> Liv. l. xxi.  
c. 4.

\* At the battle of Bantzen, Napoleon, who was extremely fatigued by the exertions of the two preceding days, and almost entire want of rest during the night, more than once fell asleep when seated on an eminence overlooking the field, which the enemy's cannon balls frequently reached. He said, nature had her rights, which could not be violated with impunity, and that he felt more cool to give fresh orders, or consider the reports he received, when awakening in this manner from a transient slumber.—ODEL. i. 90, 91, and LAS CASES, ii. 409; FAIN, i. 411.

† "Those great virtues were equalled by as great vices; inhuman cruelty, perfidy more than Punic: no truth, no piety, no fear of the gods, no regard to an oath, no religion."

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respect only he was altogether implacable, and that was towards persons whose services to himself threatened to interfere with the supremacy of his achievements, or whose enmity had proved an impediment to his ambition. He never forgave Moreau the victory of Hohenlinden, which saved France; nor Kellerman the charge at Marengo, which fixed himself on the consular throne;\* nor Wellington the determined opposition which at last hurled him to destruction.†

Generosity with him was often admirably assumed, but self-forgetfulness was never really felt; where the object of the acting had ceased, egotism never failed to reappear in undiminished ascendancy, and dispelled in a moment the pleasing illusion. He was capable of the heroic but politic self-denial of Alexander, which, by pouring the untasted cup of water on the sands of Arabia, assuaged the thirst of a whole army; but the designless magnanimity which put the draught to the lips of the Macedonian hero, when the physician was reading the denouncing letter, was beyond his reach. He could imitate Themistocles in surrendering himself, as he himself said, to "the greatest, the most powerful, and the most persevering of his enemies;" but he would never, like him, have swallowed poison to avoid being called on to elevate himself at the expense of his country. The man who shunned death at Waterloo, after he had himself told his army that "the hour had arrived when it behoved every Frenchman who loved his country to conquer or die," had no hesitation in bequeathing a legacy in his testament to the assassin who had attempted the life of the Duke of Wellington. He condemned the execution of Louis because it was a political error; but he hesitated not to murder the Duc D'Enghien because it seemed a political advantage. He loudly denounced the alleged

9.  
His mixture  
of generosity  
and selfish-  
ness.

\* "A un Re qual puossi  
Piu oltraggio far, che averlo posto in seggio?  
Tor puo il regno chi l'diede, et chi il puo torre  
S'odia et spegne dai Re."

ALFIERI, *Maria Stuardo*, A. i. S. 1.

† So true are the words of Corneille which he adopted:

"Quand un homme une fois a droit de nous haïr,  
Nous devons présumer qu'il cherche à nous trahir:  
Toute son amitié nous doit être suspecte."

*Polyeucte*, A. v. S. 1.



perfidy of the English attack on a neutral power at Copenhagen; but he scrupled not to seize the whole fortresses and royal family of Spain, in violation of a strict alliance, when it gave him a throne. His character cannot be better summed up than in the words in which profound reflection has enabled genius to define Satan,—“He was the perfection of intellect without moral principle.”\*

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Great part, however, of the selfishness which formed so important a feature, and damning a blot, in the character of Napoleon, is to be ascribed not so much to himself as to the age in which he lived, and the people whom he was called upon to rule. Born and bred in the most corrupted society of Europe, during the irreligious fanaticism, general license, and universal egotism of the Revolution, he saw no other way of governing his subjects, but by constantly appealing to their interest; and was led to believe, from what he saw around him, that it was the prime mover and universal spring of mankind. That it is so in the long run at all times, and among all people, to a great degree, no one experienced in the ways of men will probably doubt. But religious truth reveals the simultaneous agency of higher principles; and historical observation loudly proclaims that many of the most important changes in human annals have been brought about in direct opposition to its dictates. It was ignorance or oblivion of those counteracting agencies which was the grand error of Napoleon's life, and beyond all doubt brought about his fall. The Revolution misled him by establishing the fatal principle, that no other test is to be applied to human actions but success; the prevailing irreligion of the age misled him, by spreading the belief that worldly prosperity is at once the chief good in life, and the only rational object of human pursuit.

10.  
It arose  
partly from  
the vices and  
irreligion of  
the Revolution.

To rouse exertion by the language of virtue, and direct it to the purposes of vice, was the grand principle of the Revolution, and the immediate cause of its triumphs. The Emperor felt that he had at no time a chance of success

\* An expression of my highly esteemed friend the Rev. Robert Montgomery, formerly rector of St Jude's, Glasgow, now incumbent of Percy Chapel, London, whose genius as a poet conveys an inadequate idea of his eloquence as a preacher, and fervour as a minister of religion, in a depraved manufacturing community, where Christian zeal has so wide a field for exertion.

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11.  
He personi-  
fied its ruling  
principle.

but by yielding to its impulse ; and at all times he could almost command events by wielding it for his advantage. Instead, therefore, of considering Napoleon as an individual man, and striving to reconcile the opposite qualities of his character, or harshly condemning its darker features, it is more consonant both to historic truth and impartial justice to regard him as the personification of the principles which at that period were predominant in his country—as the INCARNATION OF THE LAST STAGE OF THE REVOLUTION ; and perhaps no Avatar, sent on such a mission, could have been imbued with fewer vices. In this view, we may look upon the contest in which he was engaged as the same in sublunary affairs with that awful struggle darkly shadowed forth in Revelation, to which the pencil of Milton has given the form and force of terrestrial reality ; and may view his fall as demonstrating the same Supreme direction of events which, permitting for a season, for inscrutable purposes, the agency of sin, doomed to final ruin the Prince of the Morning.

12.  
Inconceiv-  
able peculi-  
arities of his  
character.

Yet, even after making every allowance for the demoralising influence of these circumstances, there are some peculiarities in the character of Napoleon which are almost inexplicable, and which demonstrate the justice of Johnson's observation, that no man ever rose from an inferior station to the government of mankind, in whom great and commanding qualities were not blended with certain meannesses that would be inconceivable in ordinary men. Great as was his penetration, profound the sagacity of his political reflection, he yet deliberately based his throne upon the systematic oppression of all other nations by one ; and seriously believed that he needed not to disquiet himself about the results, so long as, under the stimulus of glory and victory, he let loose his own subjects to plunder and insult every people over whom they ruled. He could survey past events with an eye seldom equalled in the justice of its observation : yet he throughout life acted upon the principle, that falsehood was not only no crime, but no error ; that mankind could be permanently misled by the reiterated assertions of bought mendacity, and truth finally extirpated by the ruled bayonets of despotic power.

That salient energy, that living principle, which has hitherto always enabled Europe at length to dispel the illusions which had benighted, or throw off the oppression which had crushed it, never appears to have entered into his calculations: that retributive justice which so often, in this world, dooms enormous sin to work out its own punishment, never crossed his imagination. Though he committed, in the course of his career, many great crimes, and still more evident faults, he appeared to the very last to have been altogether insensible both to the one and the other; and repeatedly said at St Helena, that, with the exception of the invasion of Spain, he never fell into a political mistake, and on no one occasion was ever guilty of a political delinquency. Nay, he went so far as to assert, on repeated occasions, that he would present himself without fear or disquietude before his Maker, to give an account of his actions.\* His conduct and language regarding himself would lead us to suspect at times that he had been born without a conscience, or that its voice had been entirely extinguished by the effects of early education, did not his measures on various occasions prove that he was not insensible to humane and elevated sentiments, and his language on all, afford decisive evidence that no man was better qualified to detect the slightest deviation from rectitude in the conduct of his opponents.

Though his capacity in forming political designs, and even more so in carrying them into effect, was seldom surpassed, yet in his general views of policy he was far from being guided by enlarged principles, and still farther from acting consistently in the measures requisite for their execution. Self, there as elsewhere, formed the ruling principle and great blot in his character. Universal empire was the avowed object to which his life was devoted; but supposing such a design practicable, he adopted the means of all others the least fitted to carry it into effect. The magnanimous yet wise policy of consulting the interests, and bending to the prejudices of the conquered states, by which the Romans obtained the

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13.  
His entire  
insensibility  
to his own  
faults.

14.  
The despotic  
nature of his  
system of  
government.

\* "C'est avec une conviction profonde qu'il a dit, qu'il se présenterait avec assurance devant le tribunal de Dieu, et qu'il attendrait sans crainte son jugement."—*Souvenirs Historiques de Napoléon, par le BARON MENEVAL, son Ancien Secrétaire*, i. 294.

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empire of the world in ancient, and the English the supremacy in Hindostan in modern times, never entered into his imagination. To concentrate the world in Europe, Europe in France, France in Paris, and Paris in himself, was the perpetual object of his ambition. Nor was it only over the bodies and properties of men that he proposed to establish this extraordinary dominion: chains still more durable, because less immediately galling, were prepared by him for their minds and thoughts. He laboured assiduously to transfer the seat of the papal power to Paris, in order to gain possession of the vast influence which it still maintained over the faithful in every part of Europe; while, by a deep-laid and comprehensive system of secular education, he strove to mould according to his will that far more powerful portion of the people in his own country, who looked only to temporal advancement, and were swayed by nothing but temporal ambition. Thus, while he professed, and perhaps believed himself to be the man of the age, and the child of the Revolution, he ran directly contrary to the professed tenets of its supporters; or rather, he correctly discerned their real motives, and worked with perfect sagacity, to its natural result and termination, a system which, based exclusively on the selfish passions, was liable to be destroyed by their gratification, and which, subverting the influence of moral principle, left no other regulator for mankind but physical force.

15.  
His despotism naturally flowed from the Revolution.

The oppressive government, and centralised despotism of Napoleon, therefore, were so far from being a deviation from his character, or a divergence from the principles of the Revolution, that they were the obvious completion of both, and the natural termination of intellect set free from the restraints of principle. The previous convulsion had prepared the field for his dominion, and left him no other means of maintaining it but that which he adopted. The destruction of property had terminated the sway of aristocracy; the ruin of religion subverted the authority of conscience; the vices of democracy rendered intolerable the government of numbers. The character which he figured for himself, and the mission on which he often declared he was sent—that of closing the gulf of the

Revolution—were in fact nothing but an indication of the direction of its principles to their inevitable end: the subjection of mankind to private selfishness and public slavery. And although, in the later years of his life, after the European alliance, founded upon religion, and directed by aristocracy, had accomplished his overthrow, he again reverted to the language of democracy, and sought refuge in the arms of liberalism from the indignation of experience; yet this was a forced and unnatural union, suggested by interest, brought about by misfortune, and which could not, in any event, have subsisted longer than the mutual necessities which gave it birth.

But although we may discover in the vices by which Napoleon was surrounded, and on the impulse of which he was elevated to greatness, as well as in the necessities of his situation when placed there, some apology for the principles of his government, none can be found for the narrow views on which his policy was often based, and the littleness by which his private life was sometimes disfigured. In the prosecution of his favourite design of universal dominion, he neither displayed the enlargement of a great nor the views of a benevolent mind. When he had the power to remodel the European commonwealth almost at pleasure, and distribute its different governments according to the physical necessities or durable interests of their inhabitants, he appears to have been in general directed by no other principles but temporary convenience, national vanity, or family aggrandisement. Conceding to him the merit of unconquerable perseverance in the war against England, whose overthrow was indispensable to the completion of his designs; and admitting that he evinced extraordinary ability in the military and naval enterprises which he set on foot for her subjugation; there is nothing in his foreign policy on continental Europe which evinced enlarged capacity, or bespoke aptitude for universal dominion. The fatal preponderance of self marred every thing which he attempted out of the pale of France itself.

16.  
His often  
contracted  
policy.

He conceived and executed the noble design of levelling the inhospitable ridges of the Alps; yet instead of forming, as he might have done, the whole Italian peninsula

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17.

And repeated  
injuries from  
it to his own  
fortunes.

into the vast monarchy which nature has so clearly intended, and antiquity had so well prefigured, he cut it in the most arbitrary manner into shreds and patches, to form appanages for his family, or gratify the Parisians by the subjection of Rome to their government. He thereby lost the great moral support which he might have derived from the revived national spirit of the Italian people. He boasted, with justice, that he had realised the dream of Louis XIV., and that under his sway there were no longer any Pyrenees: yet he subsequently marred, by selfish aggrandisement, that great enterprise; converted an obsequious ally into a mortal enemy; substituted popular hatred for courtly subservience; and re-erected the Pyrenees, bristling with hostile bayonets, and reeking with the blood of slaughtered nations. He repeatedly had the destiny of the German empire in his hands, and by the lustre of his victories had not only obliterated the feeling of Gothic nationality, but converted the Confederation of the Rhine into the firmest outwork of his empire; yet he voluntarily threw away that splendid acquisition; cut up the Fatherland into kingdoms for his brothers, or strange offshoots of the great empire; irritated Prussia beyond forgiveness, at once by insult and injury; alienated the affections, without weakening the strength, of Austria: and purchased the applause of France by the merciless severity of requisitions which drained away the resources, and exasperated the hearts of Germany. He more than once touched on the still vibrating chord of Polish nationality, and by a word might have added two hundred thousand Sarmatian lances to his standards; but he did not venture on the bold step of re-establishing the throne of Sobieski; and by the half-measure of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, permanently excited the jealousy of Russia, without winning the support of Poland.

No one felt more strongly, or has more clearly expressed, the necessity of providing, by a firm European alliance, against the encroachments of the Muscovite empire, or made greater efforts to resist it; but he himself gave that power its strongest development: for, by unheard-of treachery on his own part, he converted the hereditary religious hatred of the Ottomans into its ally; while by

18.

Strange manner in which he marred his own designs.

intolerable arrogance he not only stilled the long-established jealousy of Sweden, but threw his own lieutenant, its ruler, into the arms of that power. He was desirous of planting his family on all the adjoining thrones, and boasted that his dynasty would soon be the oldest in Europe ;<sup>1</sup> and yet he rendered his government unbearable even to his own brothers ; made the eldest resign his crown of thorns in Spain ; drove the second to seek refuge in Great Britain, to avoid his persecution ; compelled a third, by his arrogance, to abdicate the throne of Holland ; and precipitated a fourth into sensuality at Cassel to forget his indignities. No one was more sensible of the sway of religion over the human mind, or more desirous of securing its co-operation as an instrument of government ; yet he voluntarily threw away, in later years, the immense advantages which his earlier and wiser policy had given him in that respect ; converted the Pope from a warm ally into a mortal enemy, for the gratification of calling Rome the second city of his empire ; and exhibited the scandal to all Christendom of the head of the Roman Church, bereft of his dominions and detained in captivity, praying for the triumph of heretical arms for his deliverance. The grand object of his life was the destruction of the influence and overthrow of the maritime power of England ; and yet no one ever contributed so much to its extension : for, by the rigours of the Continental System, he made all the people of Europe sigh for the return of unrestrained enjoyment from her commerce ; while, by the vexations of his domination, he arrayed all its forces in dense and burning battalions under her sway. The children of this world may be wiser in their generation than the children of light, but it is for *that generation* only.

These flagrant errors may be traced, in a great degree, to the insensibility to moral reaction, and Supreme superintendence, which formed such a striking feature in the character of Napoleon. But there are other peculiarities which will not admit of the same explanation, and which demonstrate that he had the full share of the littleness as well as the greatness of mortality. With unconquerable perseverance and merciless rigour, he enforced the Continental System, during the greater part of his reign, in

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<sup>1</sup> De Staël,  
Dix Ann.  
d'Exil, 123.

19.

His personal  
littlenesses.

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all the countries subject to his authority ; yet he himself was the first to set the example of evading his own decrees, for the sake of temporary profit to himself ; and while he was shooting, in the maritime departments, wretched shopkeepers who smuggled a pound of sugar, and heading a crusade of western Europe against Russia to enforce the observance of that system, he himself was daily amassing treasure in the vaults of the Tuileries, by selling licenses to deal in contraband goods, to an extent which defeated the whole object of his policy in that vital particular. He was well aware of the support which the fidelity of his marshals and chief dignitaries gave to his empire, and his extraordinary knowledge of the human heart gave him unbounded sway over the affections of his soldiers ; yet he alienated the attachment of all in authority, but a few devoted personal followers, by the occasional rudeness of his manner, and the repeated fits of ill-humour with which he received any ill success, or the slightest deviation from his commands. Great as he was, he evinced an unpardonable littleness in the envy which he felt at celebrity in others, and the tenacity with which he clung to the externals of power in himself. He outshone the military glories of Sylla ; but he could not, like him, have laid down his power, and returned to the walks of private life : his exploits were greater than those of Cæsar ; but he would never have refused the proffered crown even when he enjoyed its power. When seated on the throne of Charlemagne, he was afraid of the talents of Madame de Staël, and envious of the beauty of Madame Recamier ; and the Emperor who had borne with noble equanimity a fall from the greatest throne in Europe, and was engaged, at the time, with the most elevated subjects of thought, often found his serenity overturned at St Helena, by the English sentinels addressing him, in obedience to their orders, by the title of General.

If the military capacity of the emperor on most occasions was without an equal in modern times, his recklessness and obstinacy at others were not less remarkable ; and accordingly, if history can hardly find a parallel to the achievements which he effected, it can produce none to the disasters in which they terminated. He repeatedly

20.  
Great mili-  
tary errors  
which he  
committed.



committed faults as a general, for the least considerable of which he would have made his lieutenants lose their heads. The imprudence of delivering a pitched battle with inferior forces at Aspern, with the Danube, traversed only by two bridges, shaking under the swollen torrent, in his rear, was equalled only by that of risking his crown at Leipsic, in a situation where, while combating a greatly superior force in front, he had no line of retreat but a single chaussée, traversing an otherwise impassable morass a mile and a half broad. And the gross violation of all military principle in both is strongly illustrated by his own observation, that the first duty of a commander is never to fight with a strait or defile in his rear.\* His imprudence in lingering so long at Moscow, surrounded by a hostile population and superior cavalry, was soon, if possible, outdone by that of relinquishing, without any adequate cause, the Kalouga road : and when the Russians were actually abandoning it, throwing back his army on the wasted line of the Smolensko advance. The unheard-of calamities of that campaign itself are mainly to be ascribed to his extreme imprudence, in advancing, contrary to the advice of his most experienced generals, to Moscow from Witepsk, without either force adequate to subdue Russia, or any sufficient preparation for retreat in the event of disaster. And the simultaneous loss of Spain was chiefly owing to the uncalled-for temerity of rushing into the Russian contest, while the wound in the Peninsula, a devouring ulcer, was still unhealed in his rear.

When hard pressed by the troops of coalesced Europe in Germany, and unable to array an adequate force to combat them, he sacrificed his best troops in his empire, a hundred thousand strong, in the fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder ; and when reduced to fifty thousand combatants on the plains of Champagne, he lost, by his obstinate retention of the fortresses on the Rhine, a force which would have enabled him to drive the invader beyond that barrier stream. In these, and many similar instances, especially in the later stages of his career, it was

21.  
Especially in  
Germany in  
1813.

\* "The first requisite of a field of battle is to have no defiles in its rear. The injudicious choice of the field of battle at Waterloo by Wellington, rendered all retreat impossible."—*Book ix. of NAPOLEON'S Memoirs*, 207.

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evident that Napoleon was either infatuated by his long-continued and extraordinary success; or, what is more probable, that his vision as a general was obliterated by his necessities as an emperor, and that his favourite maxim, that "the first movement in retreat was the commencement of ruin," rendered him insensible to all the present dangers of his situation.\* And, perhaps, it is well for the liberty of Europe that these numerous and glaring errors were committed by the French emperor in his warlike career. For such was the profound ability which on other occasions he exhibited in his designs, and the matchless skill with which on all he carried them into execution, that if it had been otherwise—if his prudence had been equal to his genius, or his foresight to his combination—and if revolutionary passion in France had not compelled him frequently to sacrifice the ultimate safety of the empire to the present dazzling of its inhabitants—it is doubtful whether he would not have attained universal dominion, and the independence of nations been permanently crushed, as in ancient times, under the yoke of military power.

22.  
The glories of  
his last cam-  
paign in  
France.

It is pleasing, where so many and such serious faults have been committed, to have some redeeming actions to record; and they, in Napoleon's case, are of such a kind, and occurred at such a time, as almost to demonstrate that it was the pressure of political considerations, the experienced necessity of keeping in constant excitement the passions of the Revolution, which drove him so often into blameable actions. His last campaign in France exhibits, if the military operations of the General and enduring fortitude of the Emperor are both taken into consideration, a model of heroic courage and military ability. Disdaining to submit even to the forces of combined Europe; but feebly seconded by a large portion of his subjects; heading an array depressed by unparalleled disasters, and an empire exhausted by unexampled efforts—he sought, and all but found, in his own genius, a counterpoise to these accumulated difficulties. In every emergency he took counsel only from his own

\* This, accordingly, was the opinion of his ablest marshals:—"Napoleon," says Marshal St Cyr, "did wrong, knowing better than any one in the world that he was doing so; but overruled by a fatality which he felt it impossible to resist."—St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iii. 4.

resolution, and often found in it the means of surmounting the utmost rigours of fortune.

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“Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito  
Qua tua te Fortuna sinit.”\*

By the depth of his combinations, the vigour of his execution, the skilful use of an interior line of communication, and the incomparable rapidity which he infused into his followers, he then long held the fate of Europe balanced, even against forces four times superior, and a moral energy, roused by long previous oppression and recent victory, which it seemed impossible to resist.

It is on that memorable campaign, and the immortal one which early laid the foundation of his fortunes on the Italian plains, that his great fame as a general will ultimately rest: for in both he was destitute of the advantage of numbers, which in the intermediate periods he in general possessed; and found, in his individual resources, a power which, in the first instance conquered, and in the last all but conquered, the most rigorous fortune. And if sound political judgment must condemn the pride which made him so obstinately refuse the conditions offered to him at Chatillon, and throw all, even in that extremity, upon the chances of war; yet it must be admitted that there was something magnanimous in his resolution to run every hazard, rather than sit down on a degraded throne; and to those who weigh well the peculiarities of his situation, wielding a revolutionary sceptre, and supported by revolutionary passion, it will probably appear that he had, in reality, no other alternative; and that submission would have led him, by a process slower indeed, but one less honourable and equally certain, to destruction.

23.  
His conduct  
in refusing  
peace at  
Chatillon.

Perhaps no general, in ancient or modern times, ever possessed so unbounded a sway over the minds of his soldiers, or had created among the inferior ranks of the army such a devotion, it might almost be said an idolatry, towards his person. This was very far, indeed, from being the case among the marshals and superior officers—a great proportion of whom were in secret alienated from him by the occasional rudeness of his manner, his frequent sallies of temper, the interminable wars in which

24.  
His marvellous  
sway  
over the  
minds of his  
soldiers.

\* Æneid, vi. 95.

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he plunged them, and the rigour with which he exacted success, as the sole condition of obtaining favour, or even justice, at headquarters. As little was it occasioned, as was so often the case with the captains of antiquity, by the generous self-denial with which Napoleon shared the bed, and partook the fare, of the common soldiers. Occasionally, indeed, he visited the bivouacs, and during the Moscow retreat he relinquished his carriages to the wounded, and marched on foot in the midst of his staff. But these were the exceptions, not the rule; and, in general, the personal comforts of the Emperor, during a campaign, were studied with the most scrupulous attention, and attained to a degree of perfection that almost appears inconceivable. His carriage, in which he always travelled, except when in presence of the enemy, was roomy and luxurious: a portable library of choice authors was at hand to amuse his leisure moments; his table, served up with the utmost nicety, exhibited always the best cookery. Porcelain and gold plate of the finest description were constantly made use of, and the same etiquette and distinctions observed in his campaign tent, or temporary lodging, as at the palace of St Cloud.<sup>1</sup> It was the pains which he took to seek out and distinguish merit and talent among the private men, or inferior ranks of the army, joined to the incomparable talent which he possessed of exciting the enthusiasm of the French soldiers by warlike theatrical exhibitions, or brief heart-stirring appeals in his proclamations, which constituted the real secret of his success; and if the use of proper words in proper places be the soul of eloquence, never did human being possess that noble art in higher perfection.

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 159,  
160, 194, 196.

25.  
Examples of  
this power.

Various instances of the skilful use of this method of electrifying his troops have already been given in this history: but it was always done so admirably, and generally with such effect, as to call for particular attention. The giving of the eagles to the regiments, of the crosses of the legion of honour to the most deserving, and the instant promotion of extraordinary merit on the field of battle, were the usual occasions on which these heart-stirring exhibitions took place. They were in general arranged after the following manner:—On the day fixed

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for the distribution of those venerated insignia, the Emperor, followed by a splendid staff, entered the square of the regiment, which was drawn up on three sides facing inwards, the fourth being occupied by his suite. On the word being given, all the officers fell out, and approached the Emperor. He was alone, on horseback, in his ordinary dark-green surtout, on the dun-coloured stallion which was his favourite charger during his campaigns. The simplicity of his attire offered a striking contrast to the dazzling brilliancy of the uniforms of his attendants. Berthier then approached the Emperor on foot; the drums beat, and he took the eagle, with which he advanced to his side. Napoleon then raised his left hand towards the eagle, holding the reins, according to his usual custom, with his right. He then said in a deep and impressive voice—"Soldiers of the —th regiment, I intrust to you the French eagle: it will serve as your rallying point; you swear never to abandon it until death! You swear never to permit an affront upon the honour of France! You swear to prefer death to dishonour! You swear!" the last words were pronounced in a solemn tone, with inconceivable energy. The officers raised their swords, and the men repeated, "We swear!" with unbounded enthusiasm. The eagle was then delivered to the colonel of the regiment. With such impressive solemnities were the eagles presented to three regiments at once on the plains of Leipsic on the 15th October, the very day before the fortunes of France were overthrown on that memorable field.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 173, 174.

The distribution of the decorations of the legion of honour, and the promotion of distinguished soldiers, furnished other occasions of which the Emperor eagerly availed himself, to renew these enthusiastic impressions, and spread abroad the belief, which in truth was well founded, that the career of distinction was open alike to all of whatever grade, and that a private soldier might reach the marshal's baton through the portals of the bivouac. It may readily be conceived that these theatrical exhibitions were got up by no small amount of careful preparation; that the apparent recognition by the Emperor of a veteran of Arcola or the Pyramids was in general the result of previous inquiry; and that a minute report by the officers of the regiment, was the basis on which the seeming extempore rewards or promotions of

26.  
Distribution  
of crosses of  
the Legion  
of Honour,  
and instant  
promotion.

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the Great Chief were in reality founded. Still they were admirably calculated to rouse the emulation, and excite the ambition of the soldiers of a great military republic, of which the Emperor was the chief; and they were, above all, founded on a perfect knowledge of the temperament, at once vehement and excitable, of the French soldier. When a regiment had performed, or was about to perform any shining action, the men were drawn up, and the aspirants from each of its battalions were led up to the Emperor in front of the line: the lieutenant-colonels presented the names and services of each on little tablets to him, and the selection was made. On these occasions, a freedom of speech was indulged to the soldiers, which savoured strongly of a military republic, and offered a wide contrast to the studied servilities in the ordinary case of imperial etiquette.

27.  
Frankness in  
which he  
indulged his  
soldiers on  
these occa-  
sions.

Frequently officers, and even private soldiers, whose claims had been disregarded, remonstrated in firm, though respectful terms with the Emperor, and, if they had reason on their side, their efforts were not unfrequently successful. Though in the palace he affected the state of Louis XIV., in the camp he often deemed it prudent to permit the military license of the followers of Clovis. "Sire, I have deserved the cross!" was the usual commencement of the remonstrance. "How so?" replied the Emperor, smiling;—the battles in which the aspirant had been present, and the services he had performed, were then recounted; and if the officers present confirmed the statement, the request was at once granted. Napoleon was far from being displeased at the military frankness with which these requests were sometimes urged, and which would not have been for an instant tolerated in a civil functionary: the vehemence with which he himself addressed his officers, seemed to provoke and justify a similar style in the reply—"F—," said he once to Sebastiani, contrasting the limited exploits of his horse with those of Latour Maubourg's cuirassiers, "act like them: you command a troop of blackguards, not soldiers." "I do not command blackguards, Sire," said Sebastiani, in a firm but respectful tone; at the same time representing rapidly the reason which prevented his troops from achieving more. Macdonald supported him, and together they succeeded in reducing the Emperor to silence;<sup>1</sup> but his indignation

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 169,  
171.

broke out in violent invectives against all Sebastiani's officers, as their regiment defiled before him, while he loaded those of Latour Maubourg with eulogiums.

Such was the violence of the Emperor's temper, especially in the later periods of his career, that he not unfrequently struck the generals or high functionaries who were near him.\* This infirmity was well known to those who were habitually about his person—in particular, Berthier, Caulaincourt, and Duroc; and, to avoid the scandal of such scenes, they usually endeavoured to remove the bystanders, and not unfrequently took an opportunity of throwing the victim of the Emperor's wrath in his way some time after, when his humour had subsided, and he was then often forgiven. It was a common saying, accordingly, among those who knew him best, that though fearfully violent, he was not rancorous in his disposition;† and numerous instances occur in his life of his total oblivion of passing subjects of anger. But if his durable

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28.  
His violent  
temper, but  
frequent for-  
giveness.

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 141,  
171, 172.  
De Pradt,  
Varsovie, 44.  
Caul. i. 317,  
318.

29.  
Extraordi-  
nary power of  
judging of  
enemies in  
the field.

By long experience, joined to great natural quickness and precision of eye, he had acquired the power of judging, with extraordinary accuracy, both of the amount of the enemy's force opposed to him in the field, and of the probable result of movements, even the most complicated, going forward in the opposite armies. The roar of artillery, the smoke and rattle of musketry, even the falling of balls around him, were alike unable to divert his steady gaze, or disturb his accurate judgment. Never was he known to be mistaken in the estimate which he

\* "Napoleon was subject to terrible fits of passion and ill-humour. When he was at a loss for a good reason to oppose to those who contradicted him, he gave vent to his indignation by a short dry answer; and if any further resistance was made, he proceeded to rude extremities. To avoid the scandal of such scenes, which my character was little fitted to bear, I cut the matter short by taking a grave and respectful leave. During the campaign at Moscow, I had a quarrel with him which lasted three days, and I had actually resigned my situation, and petitioned for a command in Spain. He sent for me, however, at the end, and said, 'I won't send you to be killed in Spain; you know we are two lovers who can't live without each other.'"—CAULAINCOURT, i. 318, 319.

† "Croyez moi, il n'est pas méchant, disaient ses officiers supérieurs à son égard, quoique ce penchant à une colère excessive était connu."—ODEL. i. 171.

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formed on the distance or approach of the fire of the enemy. Even on the farthest extremity of the horizon, if his telescope could reach the hostile columns, he observed every movement, anticipated every necessity, and, from the slightest indications, drew correct conclusions as to the designs which were in contemplation. No sooner had he ascended a height, from whence a whole field of battle could be surveyed, than he looked around him for a little with his telescope, and immediately formed a clear conception of the position, forces, and intentions of the whole hostile array. In this way he could, with surprising accuracy, calculate in a few minutes, according to what he could see of their formation and the extent of ground which they occupied, the numerical force of armies of sixty or eighty thousand men: and if their troops were at all scattered, he knew at once how long it would require for them to concentrate, and how many hours must elapse before they could make their attack. On one occasion, in the autumn of 1813, some of Napoleon's generals expressed an opinion that he might expect to be assailed on the side of Bohemia. "From what I can see," said he, calmly closing his telescope after observing their troops for some time, "the enemy have there two corps of sixty thousand men; they will require more than one day to concentrate and be ready to attack; we may pursue our march."<sup>1</sup> The event proved that his prognostication was well founded.

Odel. i. 165,  
166.

30.  
His habits at  
the bivouac  
fires.

When circumstances obliged the Emperor to remain for some hours, either in the morning or evening, in the open air, the first care of the chasseurs in attendance was to make ready a good fire. The flames were always alimanted by an extraordinary quantity of wood, and for this purpose, large logs or pieces of furniture were heaped upon it. Berthier alone remained near his person, all the others keeping at a respectful distance, as they would have done from the imperial table. While waiting there, Napoleon walked about alone, with his hands behind his back, till he heard the guns or other signals of which he was in expectation. When he began to get tired he took large doses of snuff, or amused himself by pushing about the flints or pebbles under his feet, or thrusting wood into the fire. He could not remain a



moment quiet without doing something; and if news of an exciting or disquieting kind was received, he not unfrequently poured the whole snuff out of the snuff-box into the hollow of his hand, and shovelled it all at once up his nostrils.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 164, 165.

This power of judging by his eye of the distance, numbers, and designs of the enemy, was of peculiar value to Napoleon in the campaign of 1813, in consequence of the great deficiency of light troops on his own part, as well as the extraordinary skill and dexterity of the numerous bands of them in the service of the enemy. The peasantry, too, even in Saxony, were all hostile, and communicated intelligence as readily to the Allies as they withheld it from him; so that he could obtain little information, either from his own men, or the inhabitants of the country in which the operations were conducted. His turn of mind was essentially mathematical, and he applied the ordinary rules of geometry and trigonometry, with surprising quickness and accuracy, to the march and distance of troops, by a sort of intuitive mental operation, without the aid of either diagrams or calculations. Nevertheless this mental power, though of immense service in the field, and in presence of the enemy, was not without its inconvenience; and it contributed to bring about some of the greatest disasters in which the detached corps of his army, at the later periods of the war, were involved. The Emperor, being accustomed to consider every thing with geometrical precision, and to estimate human strength and capacity at its highest average, calculated upon the march of his different corps as he would have done on the result of an arithmetical calculation, and was as much surprised when the one failed him, as he would have been if the other had not produced the expected result. Knowing, by experience, that men could march, when well fed and in good spirits, ten leagues a-day, and often combat after it, he too often reckoned on their being always able to do so, and took not the smallest account of the exhaustion arising from bodily fatigue, want of shoes, mental depression, or scanty rations.<sup>2\*</sup>

31.  
Evil consequences which resulted from the Emperor's decided opinion and conduct.

<sup>2</sup> Odel. i. 129, 130.

\* "The precision with which he was accustomed to see the marches he ordered executed by his generals, led him to believe that it was easy to provide for the wants of an army. His dictatorial tone appeared to him as sufficient to procure bread and meat, as it was to assemble his corps at a given point. He

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32.

The bad effects of his impetuous temper and habits.

Indefatigable himself in the pains which he took to provide subsistence for his troops, and accurately calculating the period when the supplies ordered should arrive at their several points of destination, he invariably acted on the supposition that they had done so; and was deaf to all representations that the troops were starving, because he had given directions sufficient, if executed, to have prevented such a calamity. He never took into consideration the many cases in which the commissariat were physically unable to execute his orders, especially for the feeding of the enormous multitudes which were latterly assembled under his banners, or the still more numerous ones in which their faithful performance was eluded by the negligence or cupidity of inferior functionaries. Thus he was constantly exacting from his officers and soldiers services which they were altogether unable to perform; and gave vent to the most violent sallies of ill-humour against his generals, when in consequence battles were lost, or corps failed to reach the prescribed point at the appointed time, which alienated them not a little from his person. Yet such was the terror produced by the vehemence of his temper, and the experienced benefit, to the personal interests of those around him, of falling in with his opinions, especially in his later years, that few had the moral courage necessary to withstand the ebullition consequent on the disclosure of unexpected and unpleasant truths, and fewer still the virtue to resist the prospects of fortune and promotion, consequent on chiming in with his opinions. His conceptions were so vivid, his temper so ardent, his mind so vehement, that he became, after his accession to the empire, almost incapable of bearing contradiction, or hearing painful truths. To such a length did this arrive, that his generals ceased to report their losses to headquarters,<sup>1</sup> for fear of being

<sup>1</sup> De Pradt, Ambassade à Varsovie, 8, 9, and 94. Dumas, *Souv.* iii. 502, 503.

was too much occupied with his mathematical or geographical calculations to pay much attention to the tedious operation of providing for his troops. He detested that part of the service, as continually thwarting his projects. Daru, from the fear of irritating him, did not, on such matters, frequently venture to represent the greatness of the danger. Napoleon thought he had sufficiently provided for that department, by ordering that a great quantity of provisions should be sent from France. Every one knew how these supplies were intercepted, by the negligence or cupidity of inferior agents; but no one had the courage to tell him so; or possibly they allowed the evil to go on, that necessity might at length divert him from his system of continual warfare. For long the private soldier had become a merchandise of no value."—ODELEBEN, i. 13.

deprived of their commands ; or the details, if transmitted, produced no impression, and he prescribed attacks to them, on the supposition that their effective men were double those actually present with the eagles.\*

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This vehement and untractable character of Napoleon's mind exercised a great influence, at every period, over his fortunes, long sustaining them in critical circumstances by the force of indomitable resolution, and involving him in the end, from the effects of his obstinacy, in unheard-of calamities. It was in some measure, doubtless, owing to the impatience of control, which is, in every instance, and in the most reasonable men, the consequence of the enjoyment of long-continued power ; but it arose also, in a great degree, from original temper, and characterised more or less every period of his career. His genius was vast, but it was after the manner of the Orientals rather than the Europeans ; he followed neither the dictates of truth nor the lessons of experience, but the vivid pictures and vehement suggestions of his own fervent imagination. Such was the intensity of these impressions, that they made him entirely forget reality ; he reasoned and acted upon them, after the manner of insane persons, as if they had been actual existences.† Ideas with him instantly led to desire ; his incipient thought was already a passion ; and his chief endeavours afterwards were directed

33.  
Intensity  
with which  
he clung to  
his precon-  
ceived ideas

\* "I had received orders," says General Mathieu Dumas, "to assemble the municipality of Dresden, and to exact from them large supplies of provisions : but the passage, and above all the disorders following the retreat of the Allied army, had so completely exhausted that unfortunate city, that my requisitions, my efforts, and my menaces, were alike incapable of making them good, save with the utmost difficulty. Despite its natural fertility, that country was exhausted ; and yet it was necessary to put the army immediately in a condition to pursue the enemy, and march for several days. The Emperor showed, with great injustice, much ill-humour, because I could not conquer impossibilities ; he never admitted any obstacle of time, or the nature of things, as a bar to his will ; he was resolute to attack the enemy and push on, and insisted for the supplies. 'I wish to make of Dresden,' said he, 'with its double *tête-du-pont*, the centre and pivot of my army ; but I must have resources for my troops during their marches and operations beyond the Elbe. Do you understand me ?' I answered respectfully, but firmly, that I did not see how it was possible for Dresden to become such a *dépôt*. I went too far, doubtless, for the Emperor addressed to me some severe expressions, and sent for Duroc. 'You commit the same fault perpetually,' said Berthier to me when the scene was over ; 'you insist upon answering the Emperor.'" Dumas was never forgiven ; he was dismissed from his employment at headquarters, and left in a subordinate situation at Dresden.—See *Souvenirs de DUMAS*, iii. 503.

† In nine cases out of ten, insanity is nothing but selfishness run to seed. People think about their own affairs, or supposed grievances, till they mistake their fancies for realities, and act accordingly. Any person who will walk through a lunatic asylum, and converse with the patients, will at once perceive this. Napoleon's vivid imagination and intense thought often produced a similar result.

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to conquering the difficulties or overcoming the obstacles which opposed its execution. Thence the complaint, so commonly made against him, especially in his later years, that he had an instinctive aversion to truth, was wholly incapable of bearing contradiction, and that no one could secure his favour except by anticipating and confirming his preconceived opinions. It was not that he had a repugnance towards truth in the abstract, but that he resisted every thing which deranged or unsettled the existing current of his ideas. From the same cause, he never was known to change his opinion on any subject ; - nor did he ever admit, except in one or two flagrant instances, such as the attack on Spain, that he had done wrong or committed a mistake in his life. His ideas were conceived in the vivid imagination of the East, and much more frequently founded on abstract conceptions than practical observation ; but they were developed with the strictness of geometrical demonstration, and engraven on his mind in characters more durable than the sculptures on Egyptian granite.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> De Pradt,  
Introd. à  
l'Amb. à  
Varsovie, 94

It was very early in life that Napoleon secluded himself. as it were, from other men, and became impressed with the lofty objects to which he appeared to be destined. He himself has told us, that it was after the storming of the bridge of Lodi in 1796, that he first conceived he was to do great things ; <sup>2</sup> and we have the authority of Duroc for the assertion, that even at that early period he kept his generals as much at a distance as he afterwards did in the court of the Tuileries. Shortly after his entry into Milan, in the same year, some one hinted to him, that with his vast reputation it would be no difficult matter to establish himself permanently in that duchy. "There is a finer throne than that vacant," replied the future successor of Charlemagne. "There are two tottering crowns which I am about to prop up," said he in 1794, when out of employment after the siege of Toulon—"those of Constantinople and Persia." To overthrow the Turkish empire, and establish himself on the throne of Constantine, was the real object of his expedition to Acro in 1799 ; and even after he had seized the consular sceptre, he still looked to the east as the appropriate scene of his glory, and the only theatre of great achievements. "There

34.  
Early appearance of this peculiarity in his character, and of his views toward the East.  
<sup>2</sup> Las Cases, i. 71.

has been nothing to be done in Europe for two hundred years," said he in 1804, "it is in the East only that great things are to be achieved." All his ideas of universal empire in the West tended to, and were designed as preparations for that one favourite object of oriental ambition. It was to prepare the way for its accomplishment that he pursued England with such persevering hostility, and incurred all the hazards of the Peninsular contest; and his secret design in advancing to Moscow was less to plant his standards on the walls of the Kremlin, than to prepare the way for the seizure of Constantinople, and follow in the footsteps of Cyrus and Alexander.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> De Pradt,  
Varsovie, 17,  
18. Odel, i.  
11.

He had a very low opinion of human nature; an opinion which will probably be shared with him to the end of time by all persons in authority who are witnesses to the baseness and servility with which they are surrounded. "Tacitus," said he, "wrote romances; Gibbon is a declaimer; Machiavel is the only author really worth reading."<sup>2</sup> It must be admitted, he put in practice many of the maxims of the Florentine sage, and doubtless saw enough around him to justify the view he took of mankind. His opinion of women was still lower; he never could be persuaded to converse with them seriously on any subject, or regard them as any thing but playthings or objects of pleasure. He strongly felt, with Bacon, their value to young men as mistresses, to old as nurses; but utterly denied their utility, even to middle life, as companions.\* "Love," said Napoleon, "is the occupation of an idle man; the amusement of a busy one; and the shipwreck of a sovereign."<sup>3</sup> It was his favourite position that the Orientals understood much better how to dispose of the female sex than Europeans; that the harem was

35.  
His low  
opinion both  
of men and  
women.

<sup>2</sup> De Pradt,  
Varsovie, 17

<sup>3</sup> Las Cas.  
ii. 15.

\* The Emperor, who knew men so well, was ignorant of women. He had not lived with them, and did not understand them; he disclaimed so futile a study. His sensations, entirely physical in regard to them, admitted no influence from liveliness, intelligence, or talent; he had an aversion to their being learned or celebrated, or emerging from their ordinary domestic sphere. He placed them, in the social order, at the lowest point, and never could admit that they should have any influence over the will. A woman was in his eyes an agreeable piece of creation, a pretty plaything, an amusing *passe-temps*, but nothing more. Attempts have been made to give a romantic character to his ephemeral amours; but the truth is, that he never forgot himself in these *liaisons*; he never felt the delirium when the intoxicated heart gives more than is sought of it. "Love," said he, "is a foolish preoccupation, and nothing more; be assured of that."—CAULAINCOURT, i. 158.

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<sup>1</sup> Las Cases,  
v. 242.

the true scene both of their respectability and their usefulness; and that, if it were not for the object of having a family, no man of sense would ever marry. His well-known answer to Madame de Staël, when asked by that celebrated wit, "Whom do you consider the greatest woman that ever existed?" "She that had the greatest number of children," was not a mere casual repartee, but the felicitous expression of his deliberate opinion.<sup>1</sup>

36.

His amours.

His amorous propensities, nevertheless, were violent, and his infidelities frequent, both in Paris and the capitals he had conquered, for his physical passions were very strong. But none of his fancies ever influenced his conduct, or affected his judgment in other matters, and they were generally of very short duration. There was a brusquerie and precipitation in his manner towards women, both in public and private, which his greatest admirers admit to have been repugnant to every feeling of female delicacy. He had hardly any conversation to address to them in the saloons of St Cloud, and still less in the privacy where his passing intrigues were carried on. He thought—and often found—that they should yield as fast as a beleaguered fortress did to the assault of his grenadiers. His letters to Josephine in early life are those of an ardent lover, but there is little of the refinement of sentiment in them, even at that youthful period. He never got the better, as hardly any one ever does, of the want of the society of elegant women early in life; and on occasion of his marriage with Marie Louise in 1810, he accosted her rather as a grisette who had been won by a three weeks' fidelity, than the daughter of the Cæsars, who had been the prize of a hundred victories.<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>2</sup> De Pradt,  
Varsovie, 17.  
Capefigue,  
Histoire de  
Nap. viii.  
352.

No words can convey an adequate idea of the indefatigable activity of the Emperor, or of his marvellous power of undergoing mental and bodily fatigue. He brought to the labours of the cabinet a degree of industry, vigour, and penetration, which was altogether astonishing. Those

\* He jumped into the carriage, when she drove up to the post-town where he met her, in his great-coat wet with rain; embraced her with the ardour of one-and-twenty; ordered the postilions to drive at the gallop to Compeigne, where he asserted the conjugal rights before any marriage ceremony had been performed.—See BAUSSET, *Mémoires de Napoleon*, ii. 45, 46, and CAPEFIGUE, *Histoire de Napoleon*, viii. 352, 353. Extraordinary and incredible as this anecdote may appear, it is not without a precedent in French history, and is fully confirmed by a late and most respectable authority, Baron Meneval, private secretary to the emperor at the time, who gives exactly the same account

who were most in his confidence, were never weary of expressing their admiration at the acuteness, decision, and rich flow of ideas which distinguished his thoughts when engaged in business. When he received despatches, the first step was to call in the officer who brought them, and question him minutely as to all the particulars not specified in the writing. Not unfrequently his secretaries, or the officers in attendance, had to undergo similar interrogatories as to the places and distances which were the theatre of action. Having acquired the requisite information, he at once took his decision; and it was only on very particular occasions that he adjourned the consideration of any thing to the day following. No one better understood or more thoroughly practised De Witt's celebrated maxim, the justice of which is probably well known to all engaged extensively in active life, that the great secret of getting through business is to take up every thing in its order, and do only one thing at a time. During a campaign, he set no bounds to the fatigue which he underwent. Often, after reading despatches, or dictating orders to one set of secretaries during the whole day, he would commence with another relay at night, and with the exception of a few hours' sleep on his sofa, keep them hard at work till the following morning. The fervour of his imagination, the vehemence of his conceptions, seemed to render him insensible to the fatigues of the moment, which were felt as altogether overwhelming by his attendants, less wrapt up than himself in the intense anticipation of the future.<sup>1</sup>

If, in the course of a campaign, he met a courier on the road, he generally stopped, got out of his carriage, and called Berthier or Caulaincourt, who sat down on the ground to write what the Emperor dictated. Frequently then, the officers around him were sent in different directions, so that hardly any remained in attendance on his person.<sup>2</sup> When he expected some intelligence from his

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37.  
His extraordinary powers of mental exertion.<sup>1</sup> Meneval, i. 134, 135.  
Las Cases, vi. 213. Odel. i. 4, 181, 182.38.  
His habits during a campaign.<sup>2</sup> Las Cases, i. 357.

both of his first meeting with Marie Louise, and of his summary proceedings at Compeigne before either the civil or religious ceremony of marriage had taken place at Paris.—“L'Empereur imita la conduite que tint Henri IV. envers Marie de Medicis, dans une pareille circonstance. Un appartement avait été préparé pour l'Empereur à l'hôtel de la Chancellerie, mais son impatience ne lui permit pas de se soumettre à cette partie du cérémonial; il ne quitta point le palais, laissant le champ libre aux conjectures. La première introduction de la nouvelle Impératrice se fit le lendemain dans le cabinet de l'Empereur.”—BARON MENEVAL, *Souvenirs Historiques de Napoleon*, i. 254, 256.

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generals, and it was supposed that a battle was in contemplation, he was generally in the most anxious state of disquietude ; and not unfrequently in the middle of the night called out aloud, "Call D'Albe, (his principal secretary ;) let every one arise." He then began to work at one or two in the morning ; having gone to bed the night before, according to his invariable custom, at nine o'clock, as soon as he had dined. Three or four hours' sleep was all that he either allowed himself, or required. During the campaign of 1813, there was only one night—that when he rested at Görlitz, after the conclusion of the armistice—that he slept ten hours without waking. Often Caulaincourt or Duroc were up with him hard at work all night. On such occasions, his favourite Mameluke, Rustan, brought him frequently strong coffee ; and he walked about from dark till sunrise, speaking and dictating without intermission, in his apartment, which was always well lighted, wrapped up in his night-gown, with a silk handkerchief tied like a turban round his head. But these stretches were only made under the pressure of necessity : generally he retired to rest at eight or nine, and slept till two, then rose and dictated for a couple of hours ; then rested, or more frequently meditated for two hours alone ; after which he dressed, and a warm bath prepared him for the labours of the succeeding day.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i.  
183, 185.  
Bausset, ii.  
213.

39.  
His travelling  
carriage, and  
habits on the  
road.

His travelling carriage was a perfect curiosity, and singularly characteristic of the prevailing temper of his disposition. It was divided into two unequal compartments, separated by a small low partition on which the elbows could rest, while it prevented either from encroaching on the other : the smaller was for Berthier, the larger, the lion's share, for himself. The Emperor could recline in a *dormeuse* in front of his seat ; but no such accommodation was afforded to his companion. In the interior of the carriage were a number of drawers, of which Napoleon had the key, in which were placed despatches not yet read ; and a small library of books. A large lamp behind gave a bright light in the interior, so that he could read without intermission all night. He paid great attention to his portable library,<sup>2</sup> and had prepared a list of small editions of above five hundred

<sup>2</sup> Personal  
observation.  
Odel. i. 184,  
185. Mene-  
val, i. 379,  
380.



volumes, which he intended to be his constant travelling companions; but the disasters of the latter years of his reign prevented this design from being carried into complete execution.

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Napoleon was extremely fond of exercise on horseback, and was both a daring and indefatigable rider; but he was far from being a good horseman. He generally rode entire horses; and as he frequently had them little under command, those near him were sometimes thrown from their saddles by the effects of his awkwardness. Eight or ten steeds for his private use accompanied the carriage; but the favourite was a beautiful Arab bay, with a black tail and main. When he mounted on horseback to survey a country, two officers of his suite preceded him, and his own charger followed at a quick trot those which went before it. He usually held the reins in his *right* hand, and incessantly agitated the bit in the horse's mouth—peculiarities contrary to all the rules of the *manège*, but not a little characteristic of the incessant fervour of his mind. His restlessness of disposition was such that he could not sit still, even when carried at the gallop on horseback. The officers who rode before had come by long habit to know so well what he wanted, that he had rarely to direct their course, but his own horse followed mechanically the direction which they took. He was passionately fond of riding across the country, through fields or woods, and over heaths; and in a difficult path where riding was hazardous, and the whole party were obliged to dismount and lead their horses, the Emperor was always in spirits. If he came to any place where a disaster had been incurred, or which was associated with painful recollections, he pushed on at the gallop, and fell into a perfect fury if any thing then checked his progress. On one occasion, in the autumn of 1813, he had occasion to pass a place where seventy caissons, of great importance to the army, had been blown up the day before by the Cossacks. On seeing the ground covered with the fragments, he immediately set off at the gallop to get over it as fast as possible; and a little dog having followed his horse barking, he was seized with such a fit of anger that he drew one of his pistols, fired at the animal,<sup>1</sup> and, having

40.  
His habits on  
horseback.

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 186,  
189.

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missed, dashed the pistol itself at it, still hastening on with breathless speed ; while Rustan, who was no stranger to such scenes, quietly fell behind and picked up the weapon thus thrown away by his infuriated master.

41.  
His impetuous habits in travelling, and during a campaign.

The unceasing restlessness and indefatigable activity of his disposition were strongly evinced in the irregular hours during which different things were done, and the rigorous manner in which, nevertheless, instant obedience was enforced to his commands. Often the march of headquarters was delayed for some hours, or half a day, beyond the time fixed, while the Emperor was dictating or reading despatches ; and at the last word he would call out—"The carriage—to horse !" These words acted like an electric shock on his attendants, who straightway mounted, the carriage was instantly at the door, and the whole set off at the gallop. Caulaincourt generally rode on the right of the carriage, General Guyot on the left ; and the officers on service, pages, attendants, and grooms, with the led horses, rattled on as hard as they could drive, followed by a squadron of the Guards. The whole pushed on at a quick trot, or the gallop, often for a day or a night without halting ; and where the road was narrow, or a defile or copse was to be traversed, the vehemence with which they rode drove them against each other at the imminent hazard of their legs and necks. If the Emperor halted to make an observation, he immediately mounted one of the led horses ; and four chasseurs, with fixed bayonets on their carabines, formed a square round him, which advanced always keeping him in its centre. If a distant object was to be examined, a page brought up the telescope, a very fine one being always at hand ; the maps were frequently called for, and spread out on the ground, and the Emperor, lying down upon them, was soon as completely absorbed in his plans as if he had been in his cabinet at St Cloud.<sup>1</sup>

1 Odel. l.  
163, 164.

42.  
Custom in passing through the troops.

When the Emperor passed through a division of the Guards, all the bands of the regiments came to the front ; the troops fell back, and formed line on either side, and great pomp was observed ; the cortege passing through slowly, and saluting the officers. But no such ceremony was observed in traversing the ordinary corps of the

army ; and the passage through them was often forced at the gallop, under circumstances almost amounting to violence. The imperial suite, like a whirlwind, swept through the columns, too fast for the men either to fall into the ranks or to present arms ; and before the astonished crowd could find time to gaze on their beloved chief, the cortege was disappearing in the distance. Room, however, was always cleared ; the outriders loudly called out to make way ; and at the magic words—"The Emperor !" infantry, cavalry, and artillery, were pell-mell hurried to the side, often in frightful confusion, and with fractures of legs and arms. Loud huzzas never failed, to the very last, to greet his passage through the divisions of the Guards, by whom he was enthusiastically beloved, and whose wants were sedulously attended to. But though the young conscripts, in the beginning of the campaign of 1813, were prodigal of the same acclamations, yet hardship, disaster, and suffering, sensibly cooled their ardour, and before its close the imperial suite often traversed long columns of the army without a single cheer announcing its presence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i.  
174, 175.

When despatches overtook the Emperor, as they often did, on the road, Duroc or Caulaincourt, who rode at the side of the carriage, received and opened the bag, and presented the letters to the Emperor without stopping. Directly a number of envelopes were seen falling from the windows of the imperial carriage ; and it was evident, from the rate at which they were tossed over, that the letters were devoured with the rapidity of lightning. The useless despatches and covers were cut to pieces, and thrown out in the same way ; often in such quantities, as to strew the track of the wheels with little fragments, which, trodden under foot by the horses, or crushed under the wheels of the succeeding carriages, made a white line along the road. Napoleon generally cut these despatches to pieces with his own hands, or, if not so employed, worked incessantly with the window-sash or carriage-door. He could not remain a moment at rest. If there were no despatches or morning states to read, he had recourse to the Paris journals, or the last publications of the day, with which the drawers of the carriage were always stored ; but they generally shared the fate of the unimportant despatches, being thrown out of the windows

43.  
Receipt of  
despatches on  
the road.

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<sup>1</sup> Bausset, ii.  
214. Odel. i.  
145, 146.  
Meneval, i.  
378, 379.

after a few pages had been cut up. In such numbers were these discarded literary novelties thus tossed overboard, that the officers of the suite generally contrived to collect no inconsiderable store of diverting trifles, by picking them up on the traces of his carriage. The Emperor was insatiable for something new, and opened with avidity every fresh publication; but his taste was for solid and well-informed writings, not amusing trifles; and he had an incredible tact in discovering, from a few pages, whether there was any thing worth reading in a book. Thus, in his hands, the ephemeral literature of the day disappeared almost as fast as it was introduced.<sup>1</sup>

44.  
Ante-  
chambers of  
Napoleon  
during a  
campaign.

The antechambers of Napoleon during a campaign—whether in his tent, in the field, or in the apartments of farm-houses, or even cottages, which were dignified for the time with the appellation of “the palace”—presented the most extraordinary spectacle. No one could form an idea of the fatigue there undergone by the whole attendants, from the grand esquire Caulaincourt to the lowest of the valets. Duroc and he were themselves indefatigable, and, by unwearied exertion and extraordinary activity, had introduced the utmost degree of regularity into the imperial household; but it was no easy matter for the strength of any others in attendance, to stand the rigorous services which were exacted. Persons of illustrious birth or the highest rank—such as Count Narbonne or Caulaincourt—were obliged to wait there night after night, sleeping on straw or stretched out on chairs, ready at any moment to be called in by the Emperor. Now and then the scene was enlivened by a young and handsome actress in the last Parisian costume, who, amidst the din of war and the smoke of the bivouacs, waited to be called in to divert the Emperor for a few minutes

<sup>2</sup> Odel. i. 146.

amidst his more serious cares.<sup>2</sup> Frequently he roused his attendants eight or ten times in the night, when despatches requiring instant attention were received. All who were there on service slept habitually on straw, wrapt up in their cloaks, ready, at a moment's warning, either to mount on horseback and ride twenty or thirty miles without halting, or to take their turn, the moment the Emperor's voice was heard, in the not less fatiguing duty of answering his despatches, or writing to his dictation. So crowded was his antechamber in general with

attendants, that it was not inaptly compared, by those inhabiting it, to the inside of the wooden horse of Troy. The faithful Rustan, whom he had brought from Egypt, usually slept near the door: he dressed and undressed the Emperor; and when he rode out, was constantly at hand to bring the telescope, or provide the cloaks or umbrellas which might be required for protection from the weather.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Odel. i.  
134, 135.  
Bausset, ii.  
167.

The true scene of Napoleon's glory, and the most characteristic of the ruling passion of his mind, was his cabinet. This apartment was never wanting even in the worst accommodation; the ingenuity of his attendants supplied every defect; and if no room could be got, his tent was always at hand, which was arranged for the purpose in the middle of the squares of the Old Guard. Although this important apartment was overloaded with maps, military states, and despatches, the most remarkable and uniform regularity was observed in its arrangement; and it was so managed that, though the Emperor so often moved his headquarters, every thing was in the same place one day as another. In the middle stood a large table, on which was extended the best map of the theatre of war;\* and on it were stuck pins, with heads of different colours, to represent his own and the hostile columns. It was the duty of the director of the topographic bureau, to have the map with these pins laid down the moment that headquarters arrived at any place; and almost always the first thing which Napoleon did, when he arrived, was to call for it; for he held to it more strongly than any other want of his existence. During the whole night the map was surrounded by twenty or thirty wax candles, constantly burning, and a fine compass stood in the middle of them. So frequently did the Emperor call for the map when out on horseback, that Caulaincourt had a portable one, which he kept constantly tied to his button across his breast; and he often was required to unfold it ten or fifteen times in the course of a forenoon.<sup>2</sup>

45.  
His habits  
and labours  
in the  
cabinet.

<sup>2</sup> Odel. i.  
135, 137.  
Meneval, i.  
379, 380.

At the corners of the cabinet were four lesser tables, at which the secretaries of Napoleon were engaged in writing; and sometimes Napoleon himself and the chief

\* For the campaign in Saxony in 1813, he made use of the admirable map of Petri, of which he had felt the value in the campaign of 1806; and occasionally of that of Blackenberg.—ODELEBEN, I. 137.

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47.  
His habits of  
writing and  
dictating.

of the topographic department were to be seen there likewise. The Emperor usually dictated walking about in his green surtout and great boots, with his hat upon his head, precisely as he was interred in the grave at St Helena. As his ideas flowed with extraordinary rapidity, and he spoke as rapidly as he thought, it was no easy matter for his secretaries to keep pace with his elocution. To facilitate the expression, a certain number of hieroglyphic symbols were established by him to signify certain things; and they were not a little curious, as affording an index to the light in which these things were regarded by him. Thus, the tail of a dragon signified the French army; a whip, the corps of Davoust; *a thorn, the British empire; a sponge, the commercial towns.* It was the duty of the secretaries afterwards to decipher this chaos, and extend it in proper sentences, which was often a work of no small difficulty; but the Emperor had a singular facility in making it out, as the symbols had been established by himself. Often there were two despatches to which answers were to be dictated at the same time—one from Spain, and another from a distant quarter of Germany; but the complication and variety of objects to be considered made no confusion, on such occasions, in the steadiness of his mental gaze. The moment that a despatch was read, and its bearer questioned, an answer to it was commenced; and not unfrequently, while the secretary in one corner was making out orders of the most important kind for the war in Spain, the one that sat in another was drawing a diplomatic note; a third busy with the orders for twenty brigades; and the fourth with an A B C for the King of Rome.\* Nothing could exceed the distinctness with which the threads of all these varied subjects were preserved in his mind: and although the orders which he gave for the direction of

\* It is frequently said, from several secretaries being engaged in the room at once, that Napoleon could dictate to three clerks at a time. This, however, is a mistake, as all those who have really been so hard pressed as to require to attempt it will readily believe. It is quite possible to dictate a serious paper to one secretary, and write a letter with your own hand, or dictate short notes, requiring little attention, at the same time: the eye giving the sense of what is written; while the memory retains the import of what has been dictated: but it is altogether impossible to dictate at the same time two serious papers on different subjects, much less three. Nevertheless, a man with an active mind may frequently be seen in a room with three secretaries, and keeping them all constantly employed; but in such a case the real mental strain is with one only; the others are making out letters from hints furnished, or writing routine despatches of little moment, or copying what is put into their hands, with possibly the addition of a sentence at the beginning and end.

distant operations were often unfortunate or erroneous, from the impetuosity of his mind leading him to decide without sufficient information, and their effect was still more frequently marred by the neglect or incapacity of inferior functionaries ; yet they were always founded on an able and lucid conception on his part. And the very errors they contained, which sometimes were of the most serious kind, generally arose from the intensity of that conception rendering him blind to the opposite set of considerations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Odel. i.  
139, 141.

One of the most important officers in the military household of Napoleon, was the keeper of the portfolio—a functionary who supplied the place of the whole tribe of registrars, keepers of archives, and state-paper officers, in ordinary governments ; and who, though a simple Swiss porter, in the rank of a superior domestic, was intrusted with the keeping of papers of inestimable value. His duty was of the simplest, but also, for a long continuance, of the most exhausting kind. It was to be constantly at his post, and thoroughly acquainted with the place, arrangement, and look of all the documents under his charge : night and day he required to be at the door of the cabinet ; no excuse but severe illness could be taken for even a minute's absence. The Emperor had, with great pains, collected a magnificent set of maps, the finest probably in existence, which was his constant companion in the campaigns of Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, and Aspern ; but it was lost during the Moscow retreat, and its place was never afterwards adequately supplied. The collection, however, though of a secondary character, which was made for the campaign of 1813, was very considerable, and two officers of approved talent and fidelity were constantly in charge of it, and at hand. So peremptory were the orders of the Emperor that they should be constantly near his person with their portfolios, that they were never more than a few yards distant either from his cabinet, his carriage, or his charger ; and, being well aware of the importance of their functions, and the numerous occasions on which they were required to produce their treasures, they rode over, without ceremony, every thing that came in their way. With such minute attention to details were the operations of this wonderful man conducted,<sup>2</sup> and so vast the variety of information which

47.  
The military  
portfolio and  
its keeper.

<sup>2</sup> Odel. i.  
142, 144.

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required to be taken into account in the formation of designs which, to a superficial observer, appeared to emanate from the conceptions of original genius.

48.  
Napoleon's  
uniform and  
robust health.

Napoleon enjoyed through life the most robust health; the result in a great degree of remarkable placidity of mind. Neither his extraordinary elevation, nor his still more extraordinary fall, had any effect in permanently disturbing his equanimity of temper; and the ceaseless activity of his mind, and the gigantic projects in which he was engaged, never affected the uniform health of his body. Temperate, active, and regular, the vigour of his frame withstood all the trials to which it was subjected, and proved equal alike to the heat of Egypt and the cold of Russia; to the fatigue of the campaign of Echmuhl, and the anxieties of a fall from the throne of Charlemagne. In person he was, like Alexander and Frederick, below the average height; and his figure, as he advanced in life, became inclined to corpulence. His countenance, regular and expressive in the highest degree, seemed to realise the visions of ancient sculpture, and is faithfully represented on the canvass of David, as well as the numerous coins and medals which were struck off during his reign. The only serious complaint with which he was ever affected, previous to the appearance of the hereditary malady which ultimately proved fatal, was occasional severe vomiting, which at the time was sometimes so violent as to produce a sort of stupor, though without any other affection in the head but what arose from sympathy with the stomach, and ultimately was beneficial, from carrying off the excessive bilious secretions. It was after going through his most fatiguing campaigns that it generally appeared; and it was under that affection that he laboured on the fields of Aspern and Borodino. A desire to understand the nature of the human frame made him at one time take lessons from Dr Corvisart in anatomy; but the sight of the preparations in wax of the internal parts produced such a nausea, that he was seized with a violent fit of vomiting, and relinquished the subject. He could look unmoved, however, upon the most ghastly wounds, and stanching them on the field of battle with his handkerchief without evincing any similar sensations. He frequently said that he would die of cancer in the stomach before he was fifty, the age at which that complaint proved fatal to his father;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Meneval, ii.  
384, 385.



but he never felt any uneasiness in that quarter till he had been some time in St Helena, where it was doubtless aggravated by the climate and mental causes.

Napoleon, like Wellington and all great generals, had an extraordinary power of commanding sleep when it suited him to take rest, and doing without it when circumstances required such a privation. Six hours' rest was always enough for him in the twenty-four, as it is for all persons when undergoing great mental or bodily fatigue. It is indolent habits which require prolonged slumbers; vigour either of body or mind produces the profound sleep which speedily and completely refreshes. He awoke at once, and began to work without delay. Instantly getting up, he put on a white nightgown and silk handkerchief about his head, and with his hands crossed behind his back began walking up and down the room. He was soon immersed in his subject, and often so preoccupied that he did not perceive when his secretary, who had been sent for, had entered, but continued pacing up and down, repeatedly inhaling the odour of his snuff-box. When he began to dictate, he never failed to pour out his ideas with extraordinary clearness and rapidity: they seemed to spring, as his attendants said, "like Minerva ready armed from the brain of Jupiter." Often, in the course of his labour, he called for ices or sherbet, and always asked his secretary which he preferred before helping himself. He then in general went to bed again, and in five minutes was sound asleep. When he rose in this way and worked in the night, he desired not to be called till after seven in the morning. These were his habits as well at St Cloud as during his campaigns, for he was frequently sleepless for some hours, and when this was the case he always rose and worked till he fairly forced sleep to come to his relief. He could not bear to lie awake for any length of time unoccupied; and his attendants and secretaries were always in the ante-chamber, ready to be called in when he felt an inclination to rise.<sup>1</sup>

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49.

His command of himself in regard to sleep.

<sup>1</sup> Meneval, l. 134, 135. Gourgaud, Examin. de l'ouvrage de Segur, 94.

Although no man in modern times has occasioned such a destruction of the human species, Napoleon was often susceptible of pity for individual suffering; and as he rode, according to his constant custom, over the fields of his victories after the carnage had ceased, he frequently

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50.

Napoleon's  
occasional  
acts of  
humanity  
and gener-  
osity.<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 81.

made some of his suite stop to stanch the wounds, or alleviate the sufferings of the maimed, of whatever nation. On one occasion in Silesia, when riding in this manner over a field strewn with the wounded and the slain, he made his own surgeon dismount to bind up the wounds of a Russian who still gave some signs of life. "If he is saved," said he, "there will be one the less to hate me as the cause of his death."<sup>1</sup> Not unfrequently he dismounted himself, and felt the pulse of a wounded man, or put a flask of spirits, which his Mameluke always carried with him, to his lips, to restore the spark of life. He did this, in particular, more than once on the field of Wagram. At a fire in Verdun in 1805, some English sailors exerted themselves strenuously to extinguish the flames. No sooner had this come to the knowledge of Napoleon, than he ordered them to be sent home to their own country, with money to carry them from his privy purse. After the battle of Bautzen, he had occasion to pass through the town of Bischofswerda, which had become a prey to the flames during the preceding contest. The smouldering ruins, and starving inhabitants, striving to rescue some of their effects from the devastation, presented a most melancholy spectacle, with which the Emperor was deeply affected; and having ascertained that the fire had been occasioned by the wantonness of his own soldiers, he promised to give the sufferers indemnification, and actually fixed 100,000 francs (£4000) for that purpose; but having failed to provide the requisite funds from the military chest, the payment of this sum fell as a burden on the King of Saxony.<sup>2</sup> When he arrived at Bunzlau in Silesia, where his old antagonist Kutusoff had breathed his last, he inquired if any monument existed to his memory, and being informed that there was none, he ordered one to be raised at his own expense—an honourable design, which the misfortunes of the close of the campaign prevented from being carried into execution.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Odel. i. 85.  
Fain, 401.<sup>3</sup> Fain, i.  
441. Men-  
val, i. 385.

Heroic conduct, whether in his own troops or those of his enemies, seldom failed to arrest his attention. On one occasion, at Boulogne, he received intelligence of a young English sailor who had escaped from his place of confinement in the interior of France, and made his way to the coast near that town, where he had secretly con-

51.

His generous  
conduct to an  
English  
sailor.

structed a skiff of the branches and bark of trees, with which he was about, when seized, to brave the tempests of the Channel, in hopes of making his way to one of the English cruisers, and regaining his native country. Struck with the hardihood of the project, Napoleon ordered the young man to be brought into his presence, and himself questioned him as to his motives for undertaking so perilous an adventure; for the bark seemed incapable of bearing the weight of a human being. The sailor persisted in his having intended to embark in it, and besought the Emperor to permit him to carry his design into execution. "Doubtless," replied Napoleon, "you must have some mistress to revisit, since you were so desirous to regain your country?" "No," replied the young man, "I only wished to see my mother, who is old and infirm." "And you shall see her," rejoined the Emperor; and immediately gave orders that the young man should be equipped anew, and sent with a flag of truce on board the first cruiser with the British flag, adding a small sum for his mother, who must, he added, be no common person, to have so affectionate a son.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Las Cases,  
vii. 78, 79.

Although the campaigns were the great scene of Napoleon's activity, yet peace was very far indeed from being a season of repose to his mind. He was then incessantly engaged in the maze of diplomatic negotiations, projects of domestic improvements, or discussions in the council of state, which filled up every leisure moment of the forenoon. He rose early, and was engaged in his cabinet with his secretary till breakfast, which never lasted above half an hour. He then attended a parade of his troops, received audiences of ambassadors, and transacted other official business till three o'clock, when he generally repaired to the council of state, or rode out till dinner, which was always at six. When engaged in business, or at the council-board, his activity, as in his campaigns, was incessant: he could not rest a moment idle. At the head of the table of the council of state, he was constantly cutting the chair on which he sat with his penknife;\* and on his favourite desks at St Cloud, Fontainebleau, and the Elysée Bourbon, where all his great designs were matured,<sup>2</sup> the deep and innumerable indentations of

52.  
His habits at  
Paris and St  
Cloud.

<sup>2</sup> Caul. ii. 14.

\* "I sat down in the arm-chair on which the Emperor used to rest, all lacerated and cut up with the penknife."—*Souvenirs de CAULAINCOURT*, ii. 14.

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53.

His habits at  
meals and in  
the evening.

his penknife are still to be seen.\* If he could get nothing else to work with, he bit his own nails to the quick till the blood came.

Dinner occupied exactly forty minutes: the Emperor conversed a great deal, unless his mind was much pre-occupied, but never indulged in the slightest convivial excess. Coffee succeeded at twenty minutes to seven, unless some special occasion required a longer stay at table; and the remainder of the evening, till eleven, when he retired to rest, was engaged in discussions and conversation with a circle of officers, ambassadors, scientific or literary men, artists of celebrity, or civil functionaries. In their society he took the greatest delight. On such occasions, he provoked discussion on serious and interesting topics, not unfrequently morals, political philosophy, and history; and never failed to astonish his auditors by the extent of his information, and the original views which he started on every subject that came under discussion. A little talent or knowledge in an Emperor, doubtless, goes a great way; and suspicions might have been entertained that the accounts transmitted to us by his contemporaries of the ability of his conversation were exaggerated, did not ample and decisive evidence of it remain in the memorials of St Helena, and the luminous speeches, superior to any other at the council-board, which are recorded by Thibaudeau and Pelet in their interesting works on the Council of State during the Consulate and Empire.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Opinions de Napoléon, dans le Conseil d'Etat, par Pelet, Paris, 1833; and Thib. sur le Consulat. Paris, 1815.*

54.

His habits as  
a husband  
and a father.

In domestic life, Napoleon was exempt from the habitual influence of most of the vices which so often consume the time and destroy the usefulness of persons in his exalted station. Though not a faithful, he was a kind husband: his attachment to Josephine, the real partner of his life, was sincere; and to Marie Louise he evinced a delicate regard and consideration which could hardly have been expected from his previous habits and advanced period of life. His transient amours, of which he had many, were conducted in strict privacy, and neither estranged him from the Empress, nor afforded any ground for public scandal. In early life, he indulged for a brief season in the dream of romantic love; and though his

\* The author has repeatedly seen them.—See also CAULAINCOURT, ii. 14.

marriage with Josephine was suggested by motives of ambition, her attractions soon acquired a powerful hold of his heart: his letters to her during the Italian campaigns breathe the ardour of devoted attachment; and to the end of his life, even after her divorce, she possessed a large share of his affection, and he in secret believed that her destiny was in some mysterious way interwoven with his own. Female blandishments never either absorbed his time, nor clouded his judgment. He was subject to terrible fits of jealousy, for which the levities and extravagance of Josephine afforded too much foundation: but he was not unforgiving in his disposition; and, though his moody temperament was wrought up on such occasions to the most violent pitch of wrath, yet he was not inaccessible to returning reason or forgiveness. His divorce of her was suggested by the ruling principles of his life—state policy and ambition; and the pain which it cost him\* was greater than could have been expected from one who was habitually guided by views of a general nature; while its ultimate disastrous effects afforded a signal proof that durable advantage, even in this world, is not to be purchased by harsh or iniquitous measures.<sup>1</sup> Though the Empress Marie Louise was little more than an amiable nonentity, and she proved herself in the end altogether unworthy of being his wife, yet he was kind and considerate to her during the few years that she shared his fortunes: and towards the King of Rome he invariably felt the warmest affection. Parental feelings, indeed, strong in almost all but the utterly selfish, were peculiarly warm in his bosom. The education and progress of his son occupied a large share of his attention, even on the most momentous occasions of his life;† and one of the bitterest pangs which he felt during his exile at St Helena,<sup>2</sup> was owing to his separation from that

<sup>1</sup> Bausset, ii.  
7, 8. Meneval, i. 230.

<sup>2</sup> Las Cases.  
O'Meara.

\* “A l'issue de la triste cérémonie qui délia les nœuds que la fécondité de Josephine aurait rendu aussi durables que leur vie, l'Empereur rentra dans son cabinet, triste et silencieux; il se laissa tomber sur la causeuse où il s'asseyait habituellement, dans un état d'abutement complet. Il y resta quelques minutes, la tête appuyée sur la main, et quand il s'éleva, sa figure était bouleversée. Quand on vint l'avertir que ses voitures étaient prêtes, il prit son chapeau, et nous entrâmes dans l'appartement de l'Impératrice. Au bruit que nous fîmes en entrant, elle s'éleva vivement, et se jeta en sanglotant au cou de l'Empereur, qui la serra contre sa poitrine en l'embrassant à plusieurs reprises.”—MENEVAL, i. 230.

† See in particular his conduct on receiving the portrait of the King of Rome the evening before the battle of Borodino.—*Ante*, Chap. lxxi. § 74.

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55.

His conduct  
at St  
Helena.

beloved infant, with whom his affections and prospective glories had been indissolubly wound up.

To complete the character of this extraordinary man— it only remains to add, that his conduct at the time of his fall, and during his exile at St Helena, exhibited the same mixture of grandeur and littleness, of selfishness and magnanimity, which characterised every other period of his life. History has not a more splendid scene to record than his heroic though unsuccessful campaign in France in 1814; but he lost its whole fruit by the want of moral courage to prosecute his movement upon St Dizier, and was content at last to abdicate his throne, and retire to a little appanage assigned him by the conquerors in the island of Elba. His triumphant return from thence to Paris in the succeeding year, seemed to have outdone all that romance had figured of the marvellous; and his genius never shone forth with brighter lustre than in the preparations which he made during the Hundred Days to renew the war, as well as in the conduct of the short and decisive campaign which followed; but, although he himself has repeatedly admitted that he should have died at Waterloo,\* yet he had no hesitation in fleeing from his faithful Guards on that fatal field, and purchasing his personal safety, by surrendering to a British man-of-war. He bore his exile in St Helena in general with praise-worthy equanimity; and his conversations in that sequestered isle will be admired to the end of the world, as extraordinary proofs of the vigour of his genius and depth of his thoughts. Yet even there, the pettishness of a little, stood in striking contrast to the grandeur of an exalted mind: he fretted at restraints which, had he been in the place of the Allies, would possibly have been cut short by the scaffold; and the general who had been recounting the greatest achievements in modern history, the prophet who was piercing with his eye the depths of futurity, often found his serenity disturbed, and his reflection destroyed, by the appearance of an English uniform attending him in his rides, or the omission on the part of some one of his attendants to salute him with the title of Emperor.

\* "I should have died, if not at Moscow, at latest at Waterloo."—LAS CASES, vii. 70, 71.

The preceding detail, long and minute as it is, will probably be regarded by many as not the least interesting part of this history; and by all be deemed to give a truer insight into the character of Napoleon, than the public actions, embracing such great interests, and fraught with such momentous consequences, which are scattered through its volumes. They could not have been introduced earlier, for the events to which many of them refer, had not then occurred; nor later, for not an instant is then left for reflection amidst the crash which attended his fall. It is during this armistice alone, when the stream of events presents

“The torrent’s smoothness ere it dash below,”

that an opportunity occurred for collecting details concerning the character and habits of a man, who, for good or for evil, has for ever imprinted his name and deeds on the records of history.

MURAT, King of Naples, Napoleon’s brother-in-law, was also so remarkable a character during the whole wars of the Revolution, that some account of his peculiarities seems desirable. So early as the battles of Millesimo and Montenotte, in 1796, he was Napoleon’s adjutant, and by his intrepidity and daring contributed not a little to the triumphs of that memorable campaign. It was by these qualities, as well as his handsome figure and dashing manners, that he laid the foundation of the reputation which gained for him the attention of the Emperor’s sister, and, by winning her hand, led to his brilliant fortunes, and elevation to the throne of Naples. Nor was his merit in many respects inferior to his fortune. His piercing coup-d’œil; his skill in judging of the positions of the enemy; his chivalrous demeanour when leading his troops into battle; his calm intrepidity in the midst of the most appalling dangers; his tall figure and noble carriage, as well as incomparable seat on the splendid chargers which he always bestrode, gave him the air of a hero of romance, not less than the character of a first-rate cavalry officer. At the head of his gallant cuirassiers he feared no danger, never paused to number his enemies; but with matchless hardihood threw himself into the midst of the hostile array, where

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56.

Importance  
of the pre-  
ceding detail.

57.

Character of  
Murat.

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he hardly ever failed to achieve the most dazzling exploits. In Napoleon's earlier campaigns at Austerlitz,\* Jena,† and Eylau,‡ Murat was always at the head of so immense a body of horse as to render success almost a matter of certainty; and it was to the weight of this formidable phalanx, generally eighteen or twenty thousand strong, that the Emperor mainly trusted for the gaining as well as the following up of his victories.§ But his genius and daring in the field were equally conspicuous when he had no such superiority to ensure the advantage. Napoleon's sense of these qualities induced him to overlook, to outward appearance at least, his desertion of his post after the Russian retreat, and subsequent advances towards the Allies;¶ and his heroic courage never appeared with brighter lustre than when he threw a last radiance over the victories of the empire at Dresden, and stemmed the torrent of disaster at Leipsic.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i.  
198, 199.

58.  
His military  
abilities and  
civil weak-  
nesses.

Napoleon had the highest opinion of Murat's military abilities, and frequently consulted him upon the disposition of the troops, the lying of the ground, and the probable effect of any movements which were in contemplation. On these occasions, the King of Naples, who had a great degree of military frankness in his manner, and whose near connexion with the Emperor enabled him to take liberties on which no other would have ventured, spoke with remarkable decision and independence. Not unfrequently, also, Caulaincourt, on whom known fidelity and tried services had conferred an almost equal privilege, united with him in combating the most favourite projects of their chief. The habitual good-humour of the warrior king, and his constant disposition

\* *Ante*, Chap. xl. § 132. † *Ib.* Chap. xliii. § 46. ‡ *Ib.* Chap. xliv. § 67.

§ "My decided opinion," said Napoleon, "is, that cavalry, if led by equally brave and resolute men, must always break infantry." An opinion contrary to that generally received, but supported by not a few of the most memorable facts recorded by history in all ages; and one which, coming from such a commander, who so well knew the value both of infantry and artillery, is well worthy of the most serious consideration.—See *LAS CASES*, vii. 184. It was by his cavalry that Hannibal conquered at the Ticino and Cannæ, and Napoleon at Austerlitz and Jena; the Asiatic horse arrested Richard Cœur de Lion in Palestine; the Parthians destroyed Crassus and Julian in Asia, and Napoleon himself at Moscow; the genius of Cyrus sunk under, that of Alexander the Great recoiled before, the fortunes of Darius perished amidst, the Scythian cavalry; Hyder's horse all but drove the English into the Madras surf, and the English dragoons decided the fate of India at Assaye; a charge of French horsemen at Marengo placed Napoleon on the consular throne; another, of the English light dragoons on the flank of the Old Guard, hurled him to the rock of St Helena.

¶ *Ante*, Chap. lxxiv. § 17.



to make merry even in the most serious discussions, carried him in general safely through these dangerous shoals. But it was in such military discussions that the confidence of the Emperor, and with reason, terminated ; the moment that diplomacy or civil transactions came on the tapis, Murat turned aside, or left the council-room, from conscious incapacity or insurmountable aversion. "He was a Paladin," said Napoleon, "in the field, but in the cabinet destitute either of decision or judgment. He loved, I may rather say adored me ; he was my right arm ; but without me he was nothing. In battle, he was perhaps the bravest man in the world ; left to himself, he was an *imbecile* without judgment."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> O'Meara,  
ii. 96. Odel.  
i. 198, 200.

The external appearance of Napoleon formed a striking contrast to that of his royal brother-in-law. When they rode together along the front of the troops, Murat attracted universal attention by his commanding figure, his superb theatrical costume, the splendid trappings and beautiful figure of his horse, his incomparable seat in the saddle, and the imposing military dignity of his air. This dazzling display contrasted strangely, but characteristically, with the three-cornered hat, dark surtout, leather breeches, huge boots, corpulent figure, and careless seat on horseback, which have become immortal in the representations of Napoleon. The imposing aspect of Murat was, however, weakened, rather than heightened, by the rich and fantastic dress which he wore. Dark whiskers on his face contrasted with piercing blue eyes ; his abundant black locks spread over the neck of a brilliant Polish dress, open above the shoulders ; the collar was richly adorned with gold brocade, and from a splendid girdle of the same material hung a light sabre, straight in the blade, after the manner of the ancient Roman, with the hilt set in diamonds. Wide pantaloons, of a purple or scarlet colour, richly embroidered with gold, and boots of yellow leather, completed this singular costume, which resembled rather the gorgeous trappings of the melodrama than the comparatively simple uniform of modern times.<sup>2</sup>

59.  
His appearance and dress, as contrasted with that of Napoleon.

<sup>2</sup> Odel. i. 201.

But its greatest distinction was a large three-cornered hat, surmounted by a profusion of magnificent white ostrich feathers, rising from a broad gold band, which

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60.

His extra-  
ordinary gal-  
lantry of con-  
duct.

enclosed besides a superb heron plume. His noble charger was set off with gorgeous bridle and stirrups, richly gilt after the Turkish fashion, and enveloped in trappings of azure blue, the tint of the Italian sky, which also was the prevailing colour of his liveries. Above this fantastic but dazzling attire, he wore, in cold weather, a magnificent pelisse of dark green velvet, lined and fringed with the finest sables. When he rode beside Napoleon, the latter habited after his wonted unassuming fashion, in this theatrical costume, it appeared a living image of splendid folly contrasting with the naked majesty of thought. It was only in his own person, however, that Napoleon was thus simple; his aides-de-camp and suite were arrayed in brilliant uniforms, and every thing studiously attended to which could set off their lustre in the eyes of the army or people. And with whatever sentiments the fantastic magnificence of the King of Naples might be regarded on peaceful parades, they yielded to an involuntary feeling of respect when his white plume was seen, like that of Alexander the Great, or Henry IV., ever foremost in the ranks of war, plunging into the thickest of the hostile ranks, regardless of the shower of cannon-balls for which it formed a never-failing mark; or when he was beheld returning from a charge, his sabre dripping wet with the blood of the Cossacks whom, in the impetuosity of overflowing courage, he had challenged and slain in single combat.<sup>1</sup>\*

1 Odel. i.  
201, 203.  
O'Meara, ii.  
96. Las  
Cases.

61.

Character  
and history of  
Ney.

NEY is another hero whose deeds shone forth with such lustre during the whole revolutionary war, that a separate delineation of his character seems called for. Born on the 10th January 1769, in the same year as Wellington, in a humble station, the son of a common soldier who had served in the Seven Years' War, and who afterwards became a cooper, he raised himself to be a leading marshal of the empire, Prince of Moskwa, and won, by universal consent, the epithet of the "bravest of the brave." He was no common man who, even during the turbulence of the Revolution, rose in such a manner, and acquired such an appellation. In early youth, at

\* Such was his passion for danger, that he used to challenge the Cossacks to single combat, and when he had vanquished them, he would give them their liberty, often accompanied by a gold chain, which he took from round his neck, or one of the richly-jewelled watches which he always had on his person.—See O'MEARA, ii. 96; and SEGUR, *Campagne de Russie*, ii. 327.

the age of fifteen, Ney had a presentiment, as most men reserved for ultimate greatness have, that he was destined to distinction ; and in spite of all the tears of his mother, and remonstrances of his father, who had made him a miner, and wished him to remain in that humble sphere, he entered the army at Metz, on the 1st February 1787, as a private dragoon. His military air, address on horseback, and skill in the management of his sabre, soon attracted the notice of his comrades, and procured for him the dangerous honour of being selected to challenge the fencing-master of another regiment in the garrison, who had given a real or supposed insult to his corps. The commission was accepted with joy by the young soldier, the ground chosen, and the sabres crossed, when the whole party were seized by their officers ; and as duelling was then punishable with death, it was with no small difficulty, and by the intervention of a long captivity only, that he was saved from the scaffold.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ney's  
Memoirs, i.  
3, 4.

No sooner, however, was he liberated from prison than the long-suspended duel was renewed in a secret place ; and Ney, victorious, inflicted such a wound upon his adversary in the hand that it disabled him from continuing his profession, and soon reduced him to poverty. Ney having afterwards risen to greatness, did not forget the adventure, nor the calamitous consequences with which it had been attended to his opponent ; he sought him out, and settled a pension on his old antagonist. Like all men of real elevation of mind, he not only was no ways ashamed of, but took a pride in recounting the circumstances of his early life ; and when some young officers, after he was made marshal, were descanting on their descent, and the rich appointments which they enjoyed from their families, he said, "Gentlemen, I was less fortunate than you ; I got nothing from my family, and I esteemed myself rich at Metz when I had two loaves of bread on the table." When he was made marshal, a splendid party were assembled at his hotel, among whom were the chief dignitaries of the empire. Amidst them all he made his way to an old captain, who stood behind the crowd at a respectful distance. "Do you recollect, captain," said he, "the time when you said to me, when I gave in my report, 'Go on, Ney, I am

CHAP.  
LXXVIII.  
1813.

<sup>1</sup> Mémoires  
du Maréchal  
Ney, i. 3, 10.

63.  
His military  
character.

content with you ; you will make your way ?” “ Perfectly,” replied his old commander ; “ one does not easily forget having commanded a marshal of France.” His father, who tenderly loved him, lived to see his highest elevation, and was never informed of his tragic fate ; the weeds of his family alone informed him in 1815 that some mournful event had taken place ; he never again pronounced his name, and died twelve years after, at the age of a hundred, without ever having been informed of his end.<sup>1</sup>

The distinctive characteristic of Ney was his perfect calmness and self-possession in the midst of danger, and the invincible energy with which he pursued his object, notwithstanding the most formidable obstacles by which he was opposed. Showers of grape-shot, the onset of cuirassiers, even the terrible charge of the English bayonets, were alike unable to shake his resolution, or disturb his steady gaze. When one of his officers asked him, if on such occasions he never felt fear ; “ I never had time,” was his simple reply. This extraordinary self-possession in danger, accompanied as it was in his case with the practised eye which discerns the exact moment of attack, and measures with accuracy the probable resistance that may be anticipated, rendered him an invaluable auxiliary to a commander-in-chief. When Napoleon, after his glorious march across the Dnieper, near Krasnoi, in 1812, said, “ I have three hundred millions in the vaults of the Tuileries : I would willingly give them all to save Marshal Ney ;”<sup>\*</sup> he only expressed a sentiment which long experience of his vast services had suggested, and which the unexampled heroism with which he had headed the rearguard during the whole of that calamitous retreat had amply confirmed. It was when danger was greatest, and safety seemed hopeless, that his courage was most conspicuous and his coolness most valuable ; and if these qualities could have ensured success, Napoleon would have found victory in the last attack, headed by this heroic marshal, at Waterloo.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, Ney was far from being either a general of the first order, or a man of character capable of withstanding the severest trials. “ He was the bravest of

<sup>2</sup> Mém. de  
Ney, i. 19,  
21. Art.  
Ney, Nouv.  
Biog. des  
Contemp.

<sup>\*</sup> FAIN, ii. 324 ; GUERRE de 1812 ; *Ante*, Chap. lxxiii. § 75.

men," said Napoleon ; "there terminate all his faculties." Notwithstanding his great experience, he never was able to comprehend, in complicated cases, the true spirit of his instructions ; and was indebted for many of his most important successes to the admirable sagacity with which his chief of the staff, General Jomini, divined the Emperor's projects, and put his chief on the right course for their execution. It was the able counsels of this accomplished general that enabled Ney to complete the investment of Mack at Ulm, and his prompt succour which extricated him from impending ruin at Jena.\* The diverging directions which he gave to his corps had well-nigh proved fatal to the French army in the mud of Pultusk ;† and a clearer perception of the vital importance of the movement with which he was intrusted, might have re-established the throne of Napoleon on the field of Bautzen.‡ In separate command he seldom achieved any thing worthy of his reputation ; and, when placed under any other general than the Emperor, his unseasonable jealousy and overbearing temper were often attended with the most injurious results.§

But these errors, serious as they were, affected his intellectual powers only ; his subsequent vacillation on a political crisis, and unpardonable violation of his fidelity at Fontainebleau, and of his oath during the Hundred Days, have imprinted a darker stain on his memory, and prove that if his physical courage was above, his moral firmness was below, the ordinary average of human beings. Yet, even in that melancholy catastrophe, the reflecting observer will discover the grounds for individual forgiveness and general condemnation. He will contrast the weakness, under worldly temptation, of the brightest characters of the Revolution, with the glorious fidelity, under severer trials, of La Vendée, Saragossa, Moscow, and the Tyrol ; and gladly embrace the belief, that if the white plume of Murat was sullied by defection, and the glorious forehead of Ney stained by treason, we are to ascribe these grievous blots to the vices of the age in which they lived, rather than to their own individual weakness. And he will probably rest in the conclusion,

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LXXVIII.

1813.

64.  
Inefficiency  
in separate  
command.

65.  
Moral weak-  
nesses.

\* *Ante*, Chap. xl. § 60 and xliii. § 45. † *Ante*, Chap. xliv. § 29.

‡ *Ante*, Chap. lxxv § 72.

§ *Ante*, Chap. lxiii. § 88.

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LXXVIII.

1813.

66.  
Character of  
Berthier.

that the utmost efforts of worldly greatness fall short of the constancy in misfortune which religion inspires, or the superiority to temptation which virtue can bestow.

Inferior to both these characters in the dazzling qualities of a hero, BERTHIER was nevertheless too important a person in the military and civil administration of Napoleon to be passed over without special notice. He was so constantly the companion of the Emperor, and all the orders from headquarters emanated so uniformly from his pen, that it was at one period imagined that his abilities had contributed not a little to the Imperial triumphs. But this impression, which never existed among those who knew them both personally, was entirely dispelled by the incapacity evinced by the major-general on occasion of the commencement of the campaign of 1809 in Germany, which brought the empire to within a hair's breadth of destruction.\* Nevertheless, though totally destitute of the vigour and decision requisite to form a great commander, he was not without merit of a subordinate kind, and possessed some qualities of incalculable value to the Emperor. His mind was the essence of order itself. Unwearied in application, methodical in habit, indefatigable in exertion, he was constantly ready to reduce into the proper form the slightest hints of the Emperor. The precision, order, and regularity which he displayed in the discharge of these important duties could not be surpassed. Night and day he was alike ready to commence the work of redaction; no amount of writing could fatigue, no rapidity of travelling disarrange, no pressure of despatches perplex him. "This," said Napoleon, "was the great merit of Berthier; and it was of inestimable importance to me. No other could possibly have replaced him." The constant habit of associating with the Emperor, with whom, during a campaign, he dined and travelled in the carriage every day, necessarily gave him a considerable degree of influence, and the pretension of his manner indicated that he assumed more than he possessed. "That was quite natural," said Napoleon; "nothing is so imperious as weakness which feels itself supported by strength. Look at women."<sup>1</sup> Like

<sup>1</sup> Las Cases, i. 357. Biog. des Cont., par Michaud, art. Berthier.

almost all the creatures of his bounty, he deserted the Emperor in the hour of his distress, and made his peace with the Bourbons at Fontainbleau. But he did not survive long to enjoy the fruits of his defection, having perished in an ignoble manner by a fall from a window, two years afterwards, in the streets of Bamberg.

Such were the leading officers who, in his later years, were grouped around the standard of Napoleon, and the principal instruments for carrying into execution his mighty designs. Great as were their abilities, daring their courage, extensive their experience, they yet fell immeasurably short of the capacious mind of their chief; and were wholly incapable of those vast designs, and extensive combinations, which in him seemed the destined achievements of original genius. They were admirable lieutenants, perfect seconds in command, but they had nothing original in their characters. They had not the stamp of genius on their minds; they were not, like him, born to be the rulers of empires: another proof among the many which history affords of the unbounded influence of mental superiority, even in a single individual, on the destiny of nations; and an illustration of the obvious truth, that, for the accomplishment of its fixed designs, whether of progress or retribution to mankind, Providence not unfrequently makes use of the agency of individual greatness.

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LXXVIII.

1813.

67.  
Great inferiority of these  
marshals and  
generals to  
Napoleon.

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

## ARMISTICE OF PLESWITZ.

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LXXIX.

1813.

1.

Diplomatic  
relations in  
the com-  
mencement  
of 1813.

GREAT were the efforts made by the English cabinet, to turn to the best account the unhopèd-for flood of good fortune which set in during the first months of 1813. It was hard to say whether the alacrity of the nation in submitting, in the twentieth year of the war, to fresh burdens ; or the boundless generosity with which supplies of every sort were sent to the insurgent nations of Germany ; or the efforts made to strengthen the victorious army of Wellington in Spain ; or the diplomatic activity which hushed separate interests, and reconciled jarring pretensions, in the conclusion of the alliances of cabinets, were most worthy of admiration. Lofty and commanding, indeed, was the position of Great Britain, in thus finding the continental states, after so long a contest, ranging themselves around her standard, and the jealousies of rival governments merged in the common sense of the necessity, at all hazards, of throwing off the tyranny which previously she alone had uniformly and successfully opposed. But many serious obstacles were to be overcome before this consummation could be effected ; and diplomatic difficulties of no ordinary kind awaited the statesmen whose perseverance at length smoothed them all away, and cemented, out of such discordant materials, the glorious fabric of the Grand Alliance.

The decided step taken by Prussia in seceding from the French alliance, and uniting her fate to that of Russia by the treaty of Kalisch, at once and without any formal convention re-established amicable relations between the cabinet of Berlin and that of London. Long before any



diplomatic connexion had been resumed between them, immense supplies of arms, ammunition, and warlike stores of every description, had been forwarded from the Thames to the mouth of the Elbe, from whence they were disseminated through the whole Prussian dominions.\* To accelerate the conclusion of a regular treaty, Sir Charles Stewart, now the Marquis of Londonderry, was sent by the British government to the north of Germany early in April, and arrived in Berlin on the 22d of that month. Finding the King of Prussia at Dresden, he instantly pushed on to that city; and there the terms of the alliance were at once agreed upon. They were, that England, in addition to the vast stores of arms and military implements which she was furnishing with such profusion to all the Allied powers, should advance two millions sterling to sustain the operations of the Prince-Royal of Sweden in the north of Germany; and a like sum to enable Russia and Prussia to keep up the great armaments which they had on foot in the centre of Saxony; besides five hundred thousand pounds with which the British government charged itself as the cost of the Russian fleet. In return for these liberal advances, Russia agreed to maintain two hundred, and Prussia one hundred thousand men in the field, exclusive of garrisons; and on this basis matters remained till the conclusion of the armistice of Pleswitz.<sup>1</sup>

No sooner, however, were the Allied sovereigns delivered, by that armistice, from the pressure of impending hostilities, than they turned their attention to drawing closer their diplomatic relations with Great Britain; and as both Sir Charles Stewart and Earl Cathcart, the English ambassador at the court of St Petersburg, were at the Allied headquarters, a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, was soon concluded. By this treaty, signed at Reichenbach on June 14, the foundation was laid of the Grand Alliance which effected the deliverance of Europe. It was stipulated that England should pay to Prussia, for the six remaining months of the year, a subsidy of £666,666, in consideration of which the latter power was to keep in the field an army of eighty thousand men. Two separate and important articles were inserted in the

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1813.

2.

First Convention between Great Britain, Russia, and Prussia.  
April 28.

April 26.

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 5.  
13. Hard.  
xii. 180, 182.

3.

Treaty of Reichenbach between these powers.

June 14.  
<sup>2</sup> See the Treaty in Martens' Sup. xii. 571; and Ann. Reg. 1813; State Papers, 357; and Secret Articles in Schoell, x. 255.

\* *Vide* List of these Stores, *Ante*, Chap. lxxv. § 12, note.

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secret treaty. By the first of these, the British government engaged "to contribute its efforts to the aggrandisement of Prussia, if the success of the Allied arms would admit of it, in such geographical and statistical proportions as should *at least restore it to the situation in which it stood prior to 1806*;" while by the second, the King of Prussia agreed to cede to the Electorate of Hanover a part of his possessions in Lower Saxony and Westphalia, to the extent of three hundred thousand souls, including, in particular, the bishopric of Hildesheim.

4.  
Treaty with  
Russia.

By another and relative treaty, signed the day after between Russia and Great Britain, it was stipulated that Great Britain should pay to its Emperor, till January 1, 1814, an annual subsidy of £1,333,334, by monthly portions, in return for which he was to maintain one hundred and sixty thousand men in the field, independent of the garrisons of strong places. In addition to this, England took upon herself the maintenance of the Russian fleet, which, with its crews, had been in the harbours of Great Britain ever since the convention of Cintra in 1808 \* a burden estimated at £500,000 yearly. As these subsidies, great as they were, appeared to be inadequate to the daily increasing cost of the enormous armaments which the Allies had on foot, or in preparation; and, as in particular, they were likely to be rendered unavailing by the want of specie, which was every where most severely felt, it was stipulated that an issue of paper, to the extent of five millions sterling, should take place in the Prussian states, guaranteed by the three powers. Of this sum two-thirds were to be at the disposal of Russia, and one-third at that of Prussia. The ultimate liquidation of the notes, which were payable to bearer, was fixed for the 1st July 1815, or six months after the conclusion of a definitive treaty of peace, and undertaken in the proportion of three-sixths by England, two-sixths by Russia, and one-sixth by Prussia. And although the treaty, by its letter, was to continue only during the year 1813, yet the high contracting parties, both in this and the Prussian treaty, agreed to concert anew on the aid they were to afford each other in the event of the war being prolonged beyond that period;<sup>1</sup> and, in particular, "reciprocally

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
1813, 355.

State Papers,  
Martens, xii.  
568. Schoell,  
x. 255, 256.

\* *Ante*, Chap. liv. § 75.

engaged not to negotiate separately with their common enemies, nor to sign any peace, truce, or convention whatsoever, otherwise than with mutual consent."

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1813.

A supplementary treaty was signed between Great Britain and Russia at Peterswalde, on July 6, for the regulation of the German legion in the service of the Czar. It was stipulated that the expense of this legion, which was to be raised to ten thousand men, should be undertaken by the British government, and, in return, should be placed at their disposal, and officered according to their recommendation. The estimated annual expense of each man was taken at £10, 15s. overhead, including pay and provisions; a curious and valuable fact, as indicating the wide difference between the cost of military armaments on the Continent and in this country, where the charges per head are at least three times as great.<sup>1</sup>

5.  
Convention  
of Peters-  
walde,  
July 6.

<sup>1</sup> Martens'  
Sup. xii. 573.  
Schoell, x.  
256. Ann.  
Reg. 1813;  
State Papers,  
357, 359.

So excessive did the want of specie become in Germany, in the autumnal months of this year, from the enormous demands of the multitudes of armed men who were assembled within a narrow space on its surface, that England was again obliged to interpose its inexhaustible public credit to supply the deficiency. By a supplementary convention, signed at London on the 30th September, the government of Great Britain engaged to propose to parliament a measure whereby bills of credit in favour of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia should be issued by the English exchequer, to the extent of two million five hundred thousand pounds, or fifteen million Prussian crowns (thalers); one million to be put monthly into circulation, and payable in specie a month after the ratification of a general peace, at offices in such towns in the north of Germany as the British government, in concert with the courts of St Petersburg and Berlin, should point out. An option was given to the holders, instead of receiving payment in specie at that period, to fund them in a stock bearing six per cent interest. A similar treaty was, on the same day, signed with Prussia, which power obtained one-third of the proposed sum; the other two-thirds being at the disposal of Russia. These stipulations were immediately carried into effect by the British government; the issue took place, and had the effect of instantly providing the requisite supply of circulating

6.  
Convention  
of London  
regarding the  
issue of paper  
money.  
Sept. 30.

CHAP.  
LXXIX.

1813.

<sup>1</sup> See Con-  
vention in  
Martens'  
Sup. xii. 577;  
and Schoell,  
x. 261, 262;  
and Ann.  
Reg. 1813.  
State Papers,  
361.

medium in Germany and Russia, which passed at par with specie through all the north of Europe. A memorable instance of the wonderful power of national credit on human transactions, and of the marvellous effect of a paper circulation when based on right principles, and resting on a solid basis. It affords a proof also of the inexhaustible resources of a country which was thus able, at the close of a war of twenty years' duration, not only to furnish subsidies of vast amount to the continental states, but to guarantee the circulation of their own dominions, and cause its notes of hand to pass like gold through vast empires, which, extending from the Elbe to the wall of China, but a few months before had been arrayed in inveterate hostility against it.<sup>1</sup>

7.  
Treaty of  
Stockholm  
with Sweden,  
March 3,  
1813.

With Sweden also, a treaty, already alluded to, had been concluded at an earlier period, which in the end was attended with the most important consequences to the deliwerance of Europe. By this treaty, signed at Stockholm on the 3d March 1813, it was provided that the King of Sweden should employ a body of thirty thousand men, to act in concert with the Russian troops in such operations as should be agreed on in the north of Germany; in consideration of which the British government agreed to pay yearly the sum of one million pounds, by monthly instalments. Great Britain engaged to cede the island of Guadaloupe in the West Indies to Sweden, and Sweden promised to give the British subjects the right of entrepot in the three harbours of Gotenburg, Carlshamm, and Stralsund. Finally, the British government acceded to the convention already concluded between the cabinets of St Petersburg and Stockholm for the cession of Norway in perpetuity to the Swedish crown, and engaged if necessary to employ their naval co-operation along with the Swedish or Russian forces. This last article has been severely condemned by the French writers, as an adoption by the Allies of Napoleon's system of transferring kingdoms and spoliating crowns. But in answer to this it is enough to observe that though Russia, prior to Napoleon's invasion, had been in amity with the cabinet of Denmark, yet that power had adhered to his standard when the war of 1812 commenced;<sup>2</sup> and against England the Danish court had been in a state of violent hostility ever

<sup>2</sup> Ann. Reg.  
1813; State  
Papers, 356,  
Martens'  
Sup. xii. 556.  
Schoell, x.  
207.

since 1807. Having thus made their election to cast in their fortunes with the Emperor Napoleon, they had no right to complain if they underwent the fate of war from his and their own enemies. It is not the conquests wrested at the close of the war from his enemies, but those seized during peace from his allies, which form the ground of the real reproach to the system of the French Emperor.

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While the Allies were thus strengthening themselves by alliance for the great struggle in which they were engaged, Napoleon, on his part, had only one additional ally whom he gained, and that was Denmark, with whom a treaty, offensive and defensive, was concluded on the 10th July, at Dresden. The English government had made an ill-concerted attempt some time previously to compel the court of Copenhagen to join the Grand Alliance; and for this purpose a squadron appeared before Copenhagen, and demanded a categorical answer within forty-eight hours, under the pain of bombardment. This measure, which, if supported by an adequate armament, might have been attended with the happiest effects, failed from the want of any military or naval force capable of carrying it into execution; and shortly after, the treaty, offensive and defensive, was signed between France and Denmark. By this treaty it was stipulated that France should declare war against Sweden, and Denmark against Russia, within twenty hours after the denunciation of the armistice, concur with all their forces for the common object, and mutually guarantee each other's possessions. This alliance secured to the French troops a considerable support at the mouth of the Elbe, and the aid of twenty thousand good troops—a succour of no inconsiderable importance, considering the advanced position of Marshal Davoust at Hamburg, and the importance of providing a counterpoise to the Crown-Prince of Sweden in the north of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

8.  
Alliance of  
France and  
Denmark,  
July 10.

May 31.

July 10.

<sup>1</sup> See treaty  
in Martens'  
Sup. i. 589.  
Jom. iv. 315.  
Fain, ii. 15.

Austria, however, was the important power which, in reality, held the balance between the hostile parties, and whose forces, hourly accumulating behind the Bohemian hills, threatened to pour down with irresistible force upon whichever party ventured to dispute its will. In physical strength, the Allies and Napoleon, as the indecisive result of the late battles proved, were very nearly matched.

9.  
Importance  
of the posi-  
tion which  
Austria now  
held.

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France, Bavaria, and the Confederation of the Rhine, supported by Italy on the one flank, and Denmark on the other, were superior in number of inhabitants and resources to Russia, Prussia, and Sweden ; while the land forces of England were wholly absorbed in the Mediterranean and Peninsular contests. It was Austria, therefore, with her hundred and fifty thousand men, in the central salient bastion of Bohemia, which in reality held the balance ; and it was hard for an ordinary observer to say to which side she was likely to incline. For, if the direction of the Allied armies to Upper Silesia, and their abandonment of their natural line of communication with the Oder and the Vistula, indicated a reliance upon the secret favour of the cabinet of Vienna, the family alliance between Napoleon and the House of Hapsburg might be expected to lead to an opposite inclination ; and it was difficult to imagine that the Emperor of Austria would be inclined in the end to push matters to such extremities as to endanger the throne of his own daughter.<sup>1</sup>

Hard. xii.  
177, 179.  
Jom. iv. 316,  
317.

10.  
Views of the  
Austrian  
cabinet at  
this period.

In truth, however, the views of Austria at this period were sufficiently matured ; and it was only the extreme circumspection with which her cabinet carried them into execution that occasioned any doubt as to their tendency. Metternich, who at that period had come to acquire that direction of the cabinet of Vienna which he has ever since enjoyed, was too clear-sighted not to perceive the extraordinary advantages which fortune had now thrown in his way ; and he was determined, if possible, to render them the means of regaining the lost possessions, and restoring the tarnished lustre of the Austrian crown. He was too well aware of the insatiable ambition by which Napoleon was actuated, as well as the warlike influences from within to which he was subject, to place the slightest reliance on the promises of moderation now so prodigally lavished by him ; and he saw little proof of such a disposition in the determination openly avowed to avenge the defection of Prussia by entire extinction, and thereby render himself the undisputed master of Germany. By his advice, therefore, the bait thrown out of restoring Silesia to the House of Hapsburg was refused ; and the cabinet of Vienna came under engagements, conditional indeed,<sup>2</sup> but sufficiently explicit to authorise the King of Prussia to announce

<sup>2</sup> Schoell, x.  
241. Hard.  
xii. 177, 178.  
Jom. iv. 316.  
May 7.

publicly in his proclamation of 7th May,—“that in a few hours *another power* would join itself to the cause of the Allies.”

And although the unforeseen issue of the battles of Lützen and Bautzen suspended the realisation of this announcement, and threw Saxony, which was all but engaged in a similar policy, into the arms of France, yet, in truth, there was no variation of purpose on the part of the cabinet of Vienna. On the contrary, they were only the more determined, on account of the near balance of the contending parties, to turn to the best account their all-important function as armed mediators. Not only the Illyrian provinces, but Lombardy and the Tyrol, were now openly talked of as restorations to be demanded; and the restitution of the Papal dominions, and dissolution of the Confederacy of the Rhine, as concessions to be strongly contended for. Still Austria was most anxious, if she possibly could, to avoid drawing the sword; and would greatly have preferred gaining these advantages by the weight of her armed mediation than submitting them to the doubtful fortune of arms. But she was determined to appeal to that issue if her objects could not be otherwise gained; and these views were clearly evinced in the choice she made of ambassadors to send to the headquarters of the opposite parties. Stadion, the avowed enemy of the French Emperor, was despatched to those of the Allies, and Count Bubna, the declared advocate of peace, to those of Napoleon; while the Emperor Francis himself repaired to the castle of Gitschin in Bohemia, to be near the theatre of the important diplomatic negotiations, by which, to all appearance, the fate of Europe would be determined.<sup>1</sup>

Little progress was made during the first three weeks of the armistice in the work of negotiation. Difficulties arose from the very outset as to the form in which, and the parties by whom, they should be conducted. The Allied sovereigns were desirous that their plenipotentiaries should not treat directly with those of France; but that both parties should address themselves to Austria as the mediating power. This proposition was strongly supported by Prince Metternich on the part of the cabinet of Vienna. To solve this difficulty, he came in person to

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1813.

11.  
Which were not affected by the issue of the battles of Lützen and Bautzen.

<sup>1</sup> Hard. xii. 177, 179.  
Jom. iv. 316.  
Schoell, x. 241.

12.  
Commencement of the negotiations with the belligerent powers.

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1813.

June 15.

Gitschin, and an active correspondence there took place between him and Maret on the part of the French Emperor. In the course of these letters, Maret strongly insisted for a categorical answer to the question, whether France was to regard Austria as still its ally under the treaty of 14th March 1812. To this Metternich replied, that the duties of a mediator were noways inconsistent with those of an ally under the existing treaty; and therefore, that he at once agreed to a convention, to supply whatever was wanting in the original treaty, and strongly urged all the powers to send plenipotentiaries to Gitschin to conclude a general pacification. It was at length agreed that, to preserve the independence essential to the due discharge of the duties of a mediator, the alliance should not be considered as broken, but only *suspended*—an equivocal expression, which Napoleon justly considered as equivalent to its entire dissolution.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maret to Metternich, 15th June 1813. Metternich to Maret, 28th June 1813. Fain, ii. 121, 139.

13.

Interview between Napoleon and Metternich, June 28. Remarkable speech of the former.

The next point upon which difficulties arose was the form in which the negotiations should be conducted; and upon this matter the variance was such, that Metternich repaired to Dresden in person, in order to arrange the basis of the proposed mediations with the Emperor; and discussions of the highest interest and importance took place between them. They were prolonged till past midnight, and have been preserved by Baron Fain, his private secretary, and bear all the stamp of originality and truth. "You are welcome, Metternich," said Napoleon, as soon as he was introduced, "but wherefore so late? We have lost nearly a month, and your mediation, from its long inactivity, has become almost hostile. It appears that it no longer suits your cabinet to guarantee the integrity of the French empire: be it so; but why had you not the candour to make me acquainted with that determination at an earlier period? It might have modified my plans, perhaps prevented me from continuing the war. When you allowed me to exhaust myself by new efforts, you doubtless little calculated on such rapid events as have ensued. I have gained, nevertheless, two battles; my enemies, severely weakened, were beginning to waken from their illusions, when suddenly you glided in amongst us, and, addressing me in the language of armistice and mediation, you spoke to them of alliance and war."<sup>2</sup> But

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii. 34, 35.



for your pernicious intervention, peace would have been at this moment concluded between the Allies and myself.

“What have hitherto been the fruits of your interference? I know of none except the treaties of Reichenbach between Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain. They speak of the accession of a fourth power to these conventions; but you have Stadion on the spot, and must be better informed on these particulars than I am. You cannot deny, that since she has assumed the office of mediator, Austria has not only ceased to be my ally, but has become my enemy. You were about to declare yourselves so when the battle of Lützen intervened, and by showing you the necessity of augmenting your forces, made you desirous of gaining time. You have your two hundred thousand men ready screened by the Bohemian hills; Schwartzemberg commands them; at this very moment he is concentrating them in my rear; and it is because you conceive yourself in a condition to dictate the law that you have come to pay this visit. I see through you, Metternich; your cabinet wishes to profit by my embarrassments, and augment them as much as possible, in order to recover a portion of what you have lost. The only difficulty you have is, whether you can gain your object without fighting, or whether you must throw yourselves boldly among the combatants: you do not know well which of these lines to adopt, and possibly you have come here to seek more light on the subject. Well, what do you want? let us treat.”<sup>1</sup>

To this vehement attack, which embodied more truth than he was willing to admit, Metternich replied, with studied address,—“The sole advantage which the Emperor, my master, proposes, or wishes to derive from the present state of affairs, is, the influence which a spirit of moderation, and a respect for the rights and possessions of independent states, cannot fail to acquire from those who are animated with similar sentiments. Austria wishes to establish a state of things which, by a wise distribution of power, may place the guarantee of peace under the protection of an association of independent states.” “Speak more clearly,” interrupted the Emperor; “come at once to the point; but do not forget that I am a soldier who would rather break than bend. I have

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14.

His statement of the designs of Austria.

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii. 36,  
38. Hard.  
xii. 191, 192.

15.

Metternich's reply.

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offered you Illyria to remain neutral; will that suffice? My army is amply sufficient to bring back the Russians and Prussians to reason: all that I ask of you is, to withdraw from the strife." "Ah! sire," said Metternich, eagerly, "why should your majesty enter singly into the strife: why should you not double your forces? You may do so, sire! It depends only on you to add our forces to your own. Yes, matters have come to that point that we can no longer remain neutral: we must be either for you or against you."

16.  
Napoleon's  
reply.

At these words the Emperor conducted Metternich into a cabinet apart, the tables of which were covered with maps, and for some time their conversation could not be overheard. In a little, however, the voice of Napoleon was again audible above its ordinary pitch. "What! not only Illyria, but the half of Italy, and the return of the Pope to Rome, and Poland, and the abandonment of Spain, Holland, the confederation of the Rhine, and Switzerland! And this is what you call the spirit of moderation! You are intent only on profiting by every chance which offers: you alternately transport your alliance from one camp to the other, in order to be always a sharer in the spoil, and you yet speak to me of your respect for the rights of independent states! You would have Italy; Russia, Poland; Sweden, Norway; Prussia, Saxony; and England, Holland and Belgium: in fine, peace is only a pretext; you are all intent on dismembering the French empire! And Austria thinks she has only to declare herself, to crown such an enterprise! You pretend here, with a stroke of the pen, to make the ramparts of Dantzic, Cüstrin, Glogau, Magdeburg, Wesel, Mayence, Antwerp, Alessandria, Mantua—in fine, all the strong places of Europe, sink before you, of which I only obtained possession by the force of victories! And I, obedient to your policy, am to evacuate Europe, of which I still hold the half; recall my legions across the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees; subscribe a treaty which would be nothing but a vast capitulation; and place myself at the mercy of those of whom I am at this moment the conqueror! And it is when my standards still float at the mouths of the Vistula and on the banks of the Oder; when my victorious army is at the gates of

Berlin and Breslau ; when in person I am at the head of three hundred thousand men ; that Austria, without striking a blow, without drawing a sword, expects to make me subscribe such conditions ! And it is my father-in-law that has matured such a project ; it is he that sends you on such a mission ! In what position would he place me in regard to the French people ? Does he suppose that a dishonoured and mutilated throne can be a refuge in France for his son-in-law and grandson ? *Ah ! Metternich, how much has England given you to make war upon me ?*"\*1

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii. 41,  
42. Hard. xii.  
193, 194.

This violent apostrophe was delivered while Napoleon, strongly excited, was striding up and down the apartment : and at the last insulting expression, which nothing in the character or conduct of the Austrian diplomatist could for an instant justify, the Emperor let his hat, which he held in his hand, fall to the ground. Metternich turned pale, but without making the movement to raise it which his studied politeness would at any other moment have dictated, suffered him to pass and repass it several times, and at length the Emperor kicked it aside himself. After a pause of nearly half an hour's duration, during which he walked in moody silence up and down the room, Napoleon became more tractable ; and, reverting to fair words, contended only for a congress, which should continue its sittings even during hostilities, in case they should recommence. A convention in consequence was agreed upon, by which it was stipulated that the congress should meet at Prague, at latest on the 5th July, and that Austria should procure the prolongation of the armistice to the 10th August. The convention set out with the Emperor of Austria's offer of his mediation, which was accepted by the Emperor Napoleon, "for a general or continental peace." By this means, Metternich gained a great advantage over Napoleon,<sup>2</sup> inasmuch as he drove him out of his favourite

17.  
Calm conduct  
of Metternich,  
and conven-  
tion between  
Austria and  
France for a  
mediation.

June 30.

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii. 43,  
44, 46. Hard.  
xii. 194, 196.  
Cap. Dip.  
Europ. 217.

\* The authenticity and accuracy of this remarkable conversation, and the anecdote which follows, formerly rested only on Baron Fain's account of the scene, which, although worthy of all credit from the character of the writer, might be supposed to be a little influenced by his evident partiality for the French hero in whose service he was ; but it is now entirely confirmed, in every particular, by the corroborating testimony of Capéfigue, who derived his information, as to its correctness, from Metternich himself.—See CAPEFIGUE, *Histoire de l'Empire*, x. 141, and *Diplomates Européens*, p. 207, (METTERNICH.)

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project of a convention of separate powers to treat for peace ; and won him over to the acceptance of Austria's mediation, which he had so much at heart, and which was so obviously calculated to augment the influence of that country in the approaching negotiations.

18.  
Intelligence  
is received by  
both parties  
of the battle  
of Vitoria.  
June 30.

Nothing definitive, however, was as yet settled as to the intentions of Austria: she had gained her object of interposing her mediation between the belligerent powers ; but it was uncertain to which side she would ultimately incline, and Metternich had openly avowed, that if the French Emperor would accede to the terms which he proposed, she would throw her whole two hundred thousand men into the scale in his favour. But at this decisive moment, big with the fate of Europe and of the world, the star of England prevailed, and Wellington, with irresistible force, cast his sword into the balance.

June 30.

On the morning of the 30th June, on the evening of which day the convention with Austria was signed, Napoleon received by express the details of the BATTLE OF VITORIA, by which a deathblow had been given to the French power in the Peninsula, and his armies had been swept as by a whirlwind from the north and west of Spain. It was not difficult to see, therefore, to what cause his ready accession to the convention had been owing. Metternich had no sooner regained the Emperor of Austria's headquarters, than he also received the same important intelligence, which was followed a few days after by the most complete proof of the decisive nature of the victory, in the announcement that, six days after the battle was fought—viz. on the 27th June<sup>1</sup>—not one man of the seventy thousand who there combated under the standards of Joseph remained on the Spanish territory.

<sup>1</sup> Hard, xii.  
196. Fain, ii.  
64. Lond. 88,  
Thib. ix. 323.

19.  
Vast influ-  
ence which it  
exercised on  
the issue of  
the negotia-  
tions.

Great and decisive was the influence which this immense achievement exercised on the conferences at Prague. "Metternich," says Fain, "could not fail to learn the details of this victory from the mouths of the English themselves, the moment he returned to Bohemia ; and we shall soon see the *fatal influence* which it exercised on the progress of the negotiations." "The impression of Lord Wellington's success," says Lord Londonderry, "was strong and universal, and produced ultimately, in my opinion, the recommencement of hostilities." Nor is it

surprising that the English and French diplomatists then on the spot, should thus concur as to the influence of this great victory on the issue of the negotiations. The Peninsular contest was now decided; it was no longer a consummate general maintaining with inferior means a painful defensive conflict, but a victorious chief at the head of the military force of three nations, who, after expelling the enemy from the soil which they had polluted, was preparing to cross the frontier, and carry his triumphant standards into the heart of France. A hundred thousand men assembled round the standards of Wellington, awaited only the fall of the frontier fortresses to descend like a torrent from the Pyrenees, and inundate the valley of the Garonne. The charm of Napoleon's invincibility was at an end. Disaster had overtaken his arms alike in the south as in the north of Europe; no snows existed to extenuate the last calamity; and the only question Austria had to consider was, whether she should voluntarily ally herself to a sinking empire and a falling cause.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
Lond. 88.

Fully impressed with the magnitude of the disaster, Napoleon took immediate and vigorous steps to arrest it. Aware that the disunion among his generals had been one great cause of the loss of the Peninsula, he immediately sent for the ablest of his marshals, Soult, and despatched him to the theatre of war in the Pyrenees, with full powers as "lieutenant of the Emperor," and with instructions to defend the passes of those mountains to the last extremity. At the same time, orders were despatched to Suchet to evacuate Valencia, and fall back behind the Ebro into Catalonia. Thus on all sides the vast fabric of French power in Spain was crumbling into ruins; a single blow on the decisive point had sufficed to lay the huge edifice, painfully raised during five successive years, and by fifty victories, in the dust.<sup>2</sup>

20.  
Soult is sent  
with extra-  
ordinary  
powers to  
Spain.  
July 2.

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii.  
81. Hard. xii.  
198, 199.

From this moment all prospect of peace was abandoned: the views of both parties were mainly directed to war, and the negotiations at Prague were used but as a cover, on both sides, to gain time for completing their preparations. On the 5th July, only four days after the disastrous intelligence from Spain had been received, Marshal St Cyr set out on a special mission from the Emperor, to

21.  
Napoleon's  
preparations  
for war.

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July 5.

inspect the whole frontier passes into Bohemia, and report upon the forces necessary to guard them, and the amount of the enemy's troops which were collected behind the mountain screen. Meanwhile, the Emperor in all directions made the most vigorous preparations for the resumption of hostilities. Making Dresden his headquarters, he was incessantly occupied in inspecting the fortifications of that city and the adjoining forts, reviewing the numerous *corps-d'armée* which were now assembled in its vicinity, or corresponding with the different marshals who were stationed so as to maintain the line of that river from the Bohemian mountains to the sea. One

July 7.

day he went by Torgau to Wittenberg, reviewing troops and inspecting the fortifications at both places; the next he set out by Dessau for Magdeburg, and thence returned

July 9.

by Leipsic to Dresden. On another occasion he minutely inspected the fortifications of Königstein, and the famous intrenched camp of Pirna, of which the mouldering lines were renovated and strengthened.\* Such was his activity, that he not unfrequently made a circuit of seventeen or eighteen leagues on horseback, or in his carriage, in a single afternoon. When not actually inspecting the environs of Dresden, he was constantly poring over the map, with his battalions of many-coloured pins placed in almost every conceivable situation, sometimes in the Bohemian passes, sometimes in the Saxon plains; so that it was hardly possible that hostilities should take place on any ground with which he was not acquainted, or under any combination which he had not considered.<sup>1</sup>

1 Odel. i.  
221, 224.  
Fain, ii. 20,  
21. St Cyr,  
Hist. Mil. iv.  
51.

22.

His plans of  
the cam-  
paign, and  
measures for  
the defence of  
Dresden.

These minute investigations were preliminary to a design which Napoleon had profoundly conceived, and which he most ably carried into execution, of making Dresden the centre and pivot of his defensive line on the Elbe, and of taking his last stand there for the empire of Germany. The situation of the ground in its environs was eminently favourable to such a design. The Elbe, in issuing from Bohemia, makes its way into the Saxon plains between two huge rocks, which restrain the course of the river and master its direction. Their summits overlook the whole valley in which the river flows: that on

\* Erected during the Seven Years' War against the King of Prussia by the Saxon generals.

the right bank is named the Lilienstein, that on the left the Königstein. These two immense piles of stone may be regarded as the advanced sentinels of Dresden. On the Königstein was already placed a fortress of the same name, which was altogether impregnable to open force, and at its foot stands the camp of Pirna, to which the wars of the Great Frederick had given immortality. On the opposite rock, the Lilienstein, works were established which communicated by two bridges with Königstein, and the two together were intended to command the defile, and cover an intrenched camp for sixty thousand men. The lines of defence at this point extended from Gieshübel across to Stolpen, the ancient citadel of which, built on the flat summit of the basalt, was strengthened with additional works. The bridges which they commanded served as a communication, not only between the opposite fortresses, but between the armies on the right and left banks in Silesia and Lusatia. The traveller in the places now described, will recognise the well-known features of those magic scenes, where, amidst awful precipices, sable forests, sounding cataracts, and spacious streams, he regains in the heart of Germany the images and the enchantment of Alpine solitude.<sup>1</sup>

Nor was it only at the great mountain-gate from Bohemia into Saxony that the care of the Emperor was bestowed; Dresden itself was the object of his anxious solicitude. Being but imperfectly fortified, the gaps in its walls were filled up by ditches and palisades, which completed the circuit: the mouldering masonry of the old bastions was repaired, their ditches cleaned out and filled with water; while five large redoubts, connected together by strong palisades, were constructed farther out, the fire from which intersected the whole intervening space, and rendered it impossible to approach the town till part of them, at least, was taken. The value of these redoubts was strongly felt in the campaign which followed; they saved the French army from a deathblow within a few days after the resumption of hostilities. So anxious was the Emperor for their completion, that fifteen thousand peasants, drawn together by conscription from all parts of Saxony, were, during the armistice, employed constantly on them day and night. All the fortresses lower

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<sup>1</sup> Témoin  
Oculaire.  
Odel. ii. 141.  
Fain, ii. 20,  
23. Personal  
observation.

23.  
Works  
around  
Dresden.

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
24. Odel. i.  
256.

down the river were, in like manner, put in the best possible state of defence ; cannon were mounted on all their embasures, and stores and provisions for a long siege laid in by convoys from France, and requisitions from the whole adjoining country.<sup>1</sup>

24.

And on the  
Lower Elbe:

Hamburg, in particular, which formed the last of this iron chain stretching along the Elbe, was strengthened with additional works, and its old rampart repaired and ditches cleaned out ; while, under the able direction of General Haxo and Colonel Ponthon, new outworks were formed to a considerable distance round the walls, which carried the axe of desolation through the charming gardens and villas which had so long constituted the delight of that luxurious people. Their tears and entreaties were alike unavailing. The rising redoubt overwhelmed equally the scenes of festivity and the abode of joy ; the disconsolate owners, turned adrift on the world, were ridiculed when they sought indemnification : while the methodical genius of Marshal Davoust, always fully alive when money was to be wrenched from a suffering people, contrived, during the six months of his occupation, to extract such immense sums from this industrious community, as would have been reckoned impossible by the generals of any other nation, and passed as fabulous in any other age but that, which saw the arts of extortion brought to perfection by the generals of the humane and philosophic French Revolution.<sup>2</sup> \*

<sup>2</sup> Odel. i. 226.  
Fain, ii. 24.

\* Davoust levied a contribution of 40,000,000 francs, or £1,600,000, on the city of Hamburg ; and as the magistrates were utterly unable to produce such a sum, he took possession of the bank, and carried off the whole specie which it contained, amounting to more than half the sum, and levied the remainder without mercy from the inhabitants. Hamburg at this period contained about 107,000 inhabitants, being less than a third of the number at present in Glasgow ; and, taking into view the difference between the value of money in the two countries, it may safely be affirmed, that this burden was much heavier in amount than four millions sterling would be upon Glasgow at the present time. Some idea may be formed, from this fact, of the enormous amount of the contributions levied by the French generals on the countries which they occupied, and which excited every where such unbounded exasperation against them. This, however, was but a small part of the losses sustained by the inhabitants ; for Davoust seized the merchandise, shipping, and moveable property of every description that could be brought to sale, and disposed of them for the purposes of his army, insomuch that the total loss sustained by the inhabitants was estimated at four millions sterling. From the bank alone there was taken no less than 7,500,000 marks, or about £1,200,000. So sensible were the French government of these enormous spoliation, that by a treaty in 1816 they agreed to pay to Hamburg £500,000 by way of indemnity ; which, however, did not amount to an eighth part of the actual amount of their loss. So dreadfully did the city suffer from these exactions, that its population in 1814 was



By these means, though at the expense of an enormous amount of human suffering, a very strong line of defence was obtained on the Elbe. From the rocks of Königstein to the fields of Hamburg, a line of fortresses extended, some of the first order, others of inferior strength, but all calculated to impede the motions of the enemy, and afford to Napoleon the invaluable advantage of transferring the seat of his operations at pleasure from one bank to the other. Königstein, Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, Magdeburg, Hamburg, formed a chain of formidable strongholds on the Elbe, of all of which he was master; while Merseburg, Erfurth, and Würzburg composed his échelon of fortified posts from that river to the Rhine. Erfurth in particular, which lay in the centre of, and commanded, the main line of communication with France, was the object of his particular solicitude. Large stores of provisions were already accumulated within its walls, and its rocky citadels assumed the aspect of formidable forts. The active genius of Napoleon, revolving the possible events of the campaign, was providing against all the changes which might occur; and while he was closing with iron gates the passes of the Bohemian mountains, and adding to the fortifications on the whole line of the Elbe, he was alternately preparing for a desperate defensive warfare on the Saxon plains, meditating a hostile irruption into the sands of Prussia, and taking measures for an eventual retreat to the banks of the Rhine.<sup>1</sup>

The magnitude and vigour, however, of the Emperor's preparations on the Elbe, clearly evinced to both his generals and soldiers his determination to make that river the base of a desperate defensive struggle, and gave rise to much discussion and many sinister presentiments in the army. Defensive warfare does not suit the genius of the French soldiers, and it accordingly has rarely, if ever, succeeded with them. Murmurs loud and long arose on all sides against the proposed plan of operations. "Austria," it was said, "by opening the gates of Bohemia to the Allied forces, will enable them to take the whole

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25.

Strength of  
this line of  
the Elbe.

<sup>1</sup> Bout.  
Camp. de  
1813, 5, 6.  
Nap. in Mon-  
tholon, ii. 40.  
Fain, ii. 23.  
24. Jom. iv.  
363, 364.

26.  
Murmurs  
against those  
plans in the  
French army

reduced to 67,000 souls, instead of 107,000, which it contained when it was united to the French empire.—See MALTE BRUN, *Lib.* 124, *voce* Hamburg; and CAPEFIGUE, x. 271.

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1 Fain, ii. 25,  
26.27.  
Napoleon's  
reply.

line of the Elbe in reverse. Is the Emperor about to expose himself to be cut off from France? Instead of so hazardous a project, would it not be more prudent to collect our garrisons from the Oder and the Elbe, leaving those on the Vistula to their fate, and, with all the troops which can be collected, retire to a defensive position on the Saale, and if necessary to the Rhine? Serious losses indeed will be incurred by such a system, and a cloud be thrown over the star of the empire; but can it any longer be maintained in its former brilliancy, and is it not better to lose a part than endanger the whole?"<sup>1</sup>

These representations came from too respectable quarters, and were in themselves too much founded in common sense, to permit the Emperor entirely to disregard them; and therefore he laboured, in conversation with his marshals, to explain the grounds connected with the peculiarity of his situation, and the general interests of his empire, on which his plan of operations was based. "It is quite true," said he, "that you should not lightly hazard your line of communications—every tyro in the military art knows that. But at the same time, when great interests are wound up with the maintenance of a particular position, it must often be maintained at all hazards: we must have courage to apply the torch to our vessels. What would the defensive system which you advocate reduce us to?—losses greater than would result from the loss of ten pitched battles. We now require a complete triumph. The question is no longer the abandonment of such or such a position: our political superiority is at stake; the enemy would reduce it, and on it our existence depends. Are you afraid I shall be too much in the air in the heart of Germany? Was I not in a position still more hazardous at Marengo, Austerlitz, and Wagram? From Arcola to this day, all the important steps I have taken have been hazards of that description, and in so doing I have only followed the example of other illustrious conquerors.\* If the enemy debouch

\* Napoleon repeated the same opinion, after mature consideration, and a full experience of its effects, at St Helena. "Did Alexander, Hannibal, or Cæsar, occupy themselves about their line of retreat, when the moment had come to combat for the empire of the world? And what would have happened if Alexander had been beaten on the Indus, or Hannibal at Cannæ, or Cæsar on the promontory of Dyrrachium? In the campaign of 1805, I was about to have Prussia in my rear; I was engaged in the depths of Moravia; retreat across

from Bohemia in my rear, it will be precisely in order to compel the retrograde movement which you would have me voluntarily undertake. I am not in the air in Germany, when I rest on all the strong places of the Elbe.

"Dresden is the pivot on which all my operations will turn. From Berlin to Prague, the enemy is disseminated over an immense circle, of which I occupy the centre; his corps must make long detours to concentrate, whereas mine, moving on an interior line of communication, will not have half the ground to go over. Wherever I am not in person, my generals must learn to wait for me, without committing any thing to hazard. Do you suppose it likely that the Allies will be able, for any length of time, to maintain the unity requisite for such extended operations? And may not I reasonably expect, sooner or later, to surprise them in some false movement? They will throw detached parties between the Elbe and the Rhine. I expect it—I am prepared for it. Independent of the garrisons of the fortresses on that line—Mayence, Wesel, Erfurth, Würzburg—Augereau is collecting a corps of observation on the Maine. Should they have the audacity to interpose in force between our fortified lines on the Elbe and the Rhine, I will straightway enter into Bohemia; and it is I who will threaten their rear. A few Cossacks, it is true, may insult our departments bordering on the Rhine, but the National Guard will suffice to repel them; and the transference of the seat of war to the gates of Mayence would be attended with consequences of a very different description. It is very natural that the Saxons should be desirous to remove the war from their territory; but is it our interest, as Frenchmen, to re-echo their complaints? It is in the Saxon plains that the fate of Germany is about to be decided. I repeat it: the position which I occupy presents such advantages, that the enemy, even though victorious in ten battles, could hardly force me back to the Rhine; while a single

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28.  
Importance  
of the position  
of Dresden.

Germany was impossible; but nevertheless I conquered at Austerlitz. In 1806, when my columns entered the Thuringian forests, Austria was marching on my communications, and Spain was about to cross the Pyrenees; but I conquered at Jena. In 1809, when I had to contend with the waves of the Danube, Hungary and the Tyrol were insurgent on either flank, Prussia was preparing to descend to Franconia, and the English menaced Antwerp; but still I conquered at Wagram."—*NAPOLÉON in MONTHOLON*, ii. 11; and *LAS CASES*, iii. 128, 129.

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Fain, ii.  
29, 31.

victory gained by me, by bringing our eagles to the capitals of the enemy, and delivering our garrisons on the Oder and the Vistula, would speedily bring the Allies to terms. I have calculated every thing; fortune must now decide the event. However good my reasons may be, I know that I shall be judged of according to the event; it is the rigorous law of history."<sup>1</sup>

29.  
Forces of Na-  
poleon at the  
conclusion of  
the armistice.

It was not surprising that the Emperor entertained such an opinion on his chances of success in the position which he held at Dresden, for the forces which he had accumulated for its defence were very great. By vast efforts, the conscripts and reserves had been so completely brought up to the Elbe, that the army ready to recommence hostilities was raised to four hundred thousand men, of whom nearly three hundred and fifty thousand were effective, and present with the eagles.\* This immense body of men carried with them no less than twelve hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, of which two hundred were the redoubted artillery of the Guard, in the finest possible condition. The caissons were all replenished, vast military stores were collected, and the *matériel* of the army, generally speaking, was in good, that of the Guard in the most admirable, order. The cavalry was the only arm which was deficient. That of the reserve, under Murat, numbered only thirty thousand; the light horse attached to the different corps, fifteen thousand men. Nor was money wanting; the vaults of the Tuileries, the vast accumulations of the Emperor's smuggling, had poured forth their treasures with seasonable profusion;<sup>2</sup> the whole corps of the army had received their pay, and

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii. 56,  
226, 227.  
Jom. iv. 361.  
Bout. Camp.  
de 1813, 4, 5.

\* These numbers are ascertained in an authentic manner, and on the best possible evidence—the confidential correspondence of Napoleon himself at that period with the marshals commanding his armies. On the 17th August 1813, he wrote to Marshal St Cyr—"The army of Buntzlau, in Silesia, is 130,000 or 140,000 strong, independent of the Guard, which is 50,000. Poniatowsky, Kellerman, St Cyr, and Vandamme, have 70,000 opposite to Gabel in Bohemia. The Duke of Reggio is at the head of 80,000 men near Magdeburg, besides 10,000 in that fortress. The Prince of Echmuhl is at the head of 25,000 French and 15,000 Danes at Hamburg; in Torgau and Wittenberg are 20,000. It is clear that 400,000 men, resting on such a chain of fortresses as those of the Elbe, and which may at pleasure debouch by Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, and Magdeburg, are not to be turned."—See NAPOLEON to St Cyr, 17th August 1813: to DAVOUST, 13th August 1813; and to OUDINOT, 13th August 1813; St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 355, 358, 360, 367. *Pièces Just.* Jomini, accordingly, states, "The active army in Germany consisted, at the resumption of hostilities, of 400,000 men, with 1250 pieces of cannon."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoleon*, iv. 361.

ample funds existed to carry on the prodigious fortifications which were every where in progress, to render the line of the Elbe impregnable to the forces of combined Europe.

It was by unheard-of exertions, however, and by wringing out of the country its last resources, that so vast a force had been concentrated for the defensive struggle in the heart of Germany. Aware of the decisive nature of the contest which was approaching, the Emperor had spared no efforts, either of his own or his lieutenants, to bring up every sabre and bayonet into the field. The frequent desertion of the conscripts, and numerous acts of license and pillage which attended their line of march, induced him to prepare an entirely new set of regulations for restraining these disorders, which were rigidly enforced. By them he succeeded in forcing on the refractory or reluctant levies to the scene of action. Every conscript, from the time he was clothed and armed, was considered as disposable, and treated accordingly. The moment he was drawn, the young soldier was hurried off to the depôt, arrayed in uniform, armed, and that very day his military instruction commenced. As soon as a hundred were assembled, they were marched off, under the orders of a captain, to the headquarters of their regiment, and taught the manual and platoon exercise while walking along the road. Other companies were directed to the same line, and, as fast as they met, united together, so as to form a battalion of march, as it was called; and these battalions again joined, so as to form a regiment of march. Before crossing the Rhine, these troops were formed into columns of march, over the formation and organisation of which Marshal Kellerman, stationed at Mayence, presided. The most rigorous discipline was enforced upon these moving columns; and though it was inadequate to prevent dreadful disorders, consequent on the passage of such a multitude of young men just emancipated from the restraints of parental discipline, yet it augmented to a surprising degree the number of efficient soldiers who made their appearance round the eagles of the regiments. All these columns of march were directed to Dresden, where the Emperor received daily returns of the accessions of strength which his army was receiving,

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30.  
New measures of the Emperor to hasten the conscripts to the army.

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii. 52,  
53. Odel. i.  
209.

so that he knew the exact force on which he could rely. No sooner was this return made than the column of march was dissolved, and the conscripts of each regiment, under the direction of their own officers, took the route for the regimental headquarters. With such rapidity were the military formations and discipline thus acquired, that a regiment was reviewed by the Emperor, and made a respectable appearance, on the 20th July at Dresden, which had only been embodied in France on the 27th May.<sup>1</sup>

31.  
Aspect of  
Dresden at  
this period.

The concourse of so prodigious a number of soldiers at Dresden, as well as the continued residence of Napoleon, who, during the armistice, constantly had made it his headquarters, entirely altered the aspect of that charming city. If you cast your eyes on its palisadoed trenches, on the girdle of redoubts which encircled its walls; on the hosts of pioneers who cut their way through its smiling gardens; on the formidable batteries which arose, as if by magic, around its environs, and the innumerable camps which covered its lovely hills, it was hardly possible to conceive whither the peaceful Saxon capital had fled. Nothing was to be seen on every side but long columns of troops, trains of artillery, and endless files of chariots; while the rich and varied uniforms of officers on horseback, riding to and fro, bespoke the incessant activity of the chief by whom the immense multitude was ruled and directed. But in the interior of the city things still wore a pacific aspect. The multitude of French officers, indeed, and civil functionaries, who were there established, had given an entirely foreign air to the capital.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Odel. ii.  
148, 149.  
Fain, ii. 57.

32.  
Its French-  
ified appear-  
ance.

German signboards were generally displaced by French; Parisian costumes and articles of ornament were to be seen on every side; the theatres were filled with actors and actresses from the Theatre Français, or Opera Comique. The hotel-keepers and sellers of military maps reaped a rich harvest; and, what was not less characteristic of French habits, the multitude of ladies of pleasure, who resorted thither from all quarters, was so great, and the gains they made so large, that, despite the well-known extravagance and improvidence of that class, their expenditure could not keep pace with their receipts, and numbers, in a few weeks, realised fortunes which rendered

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them independent for the rest of their lives.\* Extravagance, profusion, and licentiousness, universally prevailed; and even the proverbial honesty of the Saxon character was fast giving way under the accumulated temptations which the presence of such prodigious bodies of foreign troops necessarily induced. But the progress of this moral gangrene was concealed under a still splendid exterior. The listless, indolent groups of officers who thronged the coffee-houses, lounged through the shops, or adorned the theatres; the multitudes of superb liveries which were to be seen in the streets; the splendid equipages which were driving in every direction; and the crowds of richly dressed functionaries, who every morning attended at the levees in the palace—bespoke the mighty monarch, still, from his central capital, giving the law to the half of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii. 57, 58. Témoin Ocul. Odel. ii. 148, 149.

This vast force, which, by such extraordinary efforts, Napoleon had collected together, was disposed after the following manner. Twenty-five thousand Bavarians, stationed at Munich, observed the threatening masses of the Austrians, of equal strength, who were collecting in the neighbourhood of Lintz; twenty thousand conscripts, for the most part almost entirely inexperienced, were collected, under Augereau, at Würzburg and Bamberg: Davoust occupied Hamburg, at the extreme left, with twenty-five thousand French, and fifteen thousand Danes: Oudinot, with eighty thousand, was stationed in front of Torgau, on the road to Berlin, to watch Bernadotte, who, with ninety thousand men, covered that capital; while two hundred and thirty thousand, divided into eleven corps, or forty-three divisions of infantry, and eighteen divisions, or four hundred and twenty-nine squadrons of cavalry, were under the immediate orders of the Emperor, and cantoned from Dresden to Liegnitz, with a corps, under St Cyr, to observe the passes into the Bohemian mountains. This was independent of thirty-five thousand men, of various nations, who were assembled under Rapp at Dantzic, and the garrisons on the Elbe and Oder, in all eighty thousand combatants.<sup>2</sup> But they were out

33.  
Disposition of  
Napoleon's  
force in Ger-  
many.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. iv. 361, 362.  
Fain, ii. 226, 228.

\* "Ce fut l'âge d'or des femmes livrées à la débauche. On en vit plusieurs s'enrichir au point de se constituer des rentes, ou de payer comptant en napoleons des maisons qu'elles achetaient."—*Témoin Oculaire*, 148; *Odel*. ii. 148.

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of the sphere of operations, and could only be reckoned available inasmuch as they withdrew an equal force of the enemy from the field.

34.  
Deplorable  
condition of  
the garrisons  
in his rear.

The situation, meanwhile, of the garrisons, who were in a manner lost to France amidst the inundation of hostile nations by which they were surrounded, was such, that it was impossible to expect that they could much longer hold out for the Emperor's crown. The stores which Dantzic contained were immense; but such was the situation of its defenders, that they were hardly able to make any use of them. A hundred and twenty thousand stand of arms, twelve millions of francs in specie, and five-and-twenty millions' worth in grain, and military clothing, constituted a prize to the conqueror, which it was alike impossible to abandon, and hopeless, in the end, to defend, from the condition of the garrison, notwithstanding its still formidable numbers. Five-and-thirty thousand men, composed of twenty-two different nations, had there taken refuge after the calamities of the retreat; but they were not only in part mutilated by the severity of the cold, but almost all so attenuated in body and depressed in mind, from the unexampled horrors from which they had escaped, as to be incapable of any active exertion. They brought with them, moreover, in common with those who took refuge in Thorn, Wittenberg, Torgau, and all the fortresses which opened their gates to the fugitives of the Grand Army after the Moscow campaign, the seeds of a dreadful typhus fever, the invariable attendant on wide-spread suffering, whether from civil or military causes. This terrible malady, spreading with frightful rapidity, from the crowded quarters in which they were huddled together, and the total want of hospital stores, linen, or medicines for their use, soon cut off a large proportion of the soldiers assembled. Thorn had already succumbed, from these causes rather than from the artillery of Barclay de Tolly, who, with the Russian reserve, had been intrusted with its siege. It had been compelled to capitulate, with eighteen hundred men, before a practicable breach was made. Spandau, with a garrison of three thousand, and vast military stores, was surrendered on the same terms on the 24th; and Czenstochau in Poland, with nine hundred men, on

April 17.

April 24.



the 22d. Dantzic indeed still held out, and with the whole fortresses on the Oder, Stettin, Cüstrin, and Glogau, as well as Modlin on the Vistula, and Zamosc, yet hoisted the tricolor flag. But their garrisons, weakened by disease and misery, were long unable to undertake any offensive operation; and nothing but the continued blockade of the landwehr by which they were invested, was requisite to make the fifty thousand veterans they contained surrender eventually to the Allied arms.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. xii.  
113, 114.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 27, 28.

If Napoleon made good use of his time in reinforcing and strengthening his army during the interval afforded by the armistice, the Allies, on their part, were not idle; and such was the activity which they employed, and the enthusiastic spirit with which their people were animated, that they gained much more during that interval than their opponents. It is to this accession of strength, more perhaps than any other cause, that the extraordinary and decisive success, which they so soon afterwards obtained, is to be ascribed. The first care of the Allied sovereigns, after the conclusion of the armistice, was the arrangement of a general plan of operations for the conduct of the campaign; and in this important part of their duty, they displayed equal judgment and ability. The general principle laid down was, "that the Allied forces should always be directed in strength to the quarter where the principal forces of the enemy were assembled." As a consequence of this, the detached corps which were destined to act on the rear of the enemy, should always move as directly as possible upon his line of communications. "The greater part of the Allied forces were to be accumulated in the salient angle of *Bohemia*, which appeared eminently calculated to enable them to turn with facility in whatever direction their services were required."<sup>2</sup>

35.  
Preparations  
of the Allies  
during the  
armistice.  
July 12.

<sup>2</sup> Lond. 372.  
St Cyr, iv.  
347.

In pursuance of these plans, the following operations were agreed on. Part of the Allied forces, fifty thousand strong, was to be left in Silesia, to check the operations of the enemy in that quarter, but with orders not to hazard a battle. One hundred thousand Russians and Prussians were directed to move, some days before the expiration of the armistice, by the roads of Landshut and Glatz to Jung-Buntzlau, and Budin in Bohemia, to join

36.  
Plan of the  
campaign  
agreed on at  
Trachenberg.

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as rapidly as possible the Austrian army, and augment the Allied force in that quarter to two hundred or two hundred and twenty thousand men. The army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, leaving a corps of twenty thousand men to observe the French in Hamburg, was to assemble, in number about seventy thousand men, in the environs of Treuenbrietzen, before the expiration of the armistice, pass the Elbe between Torgau and Magdeburg, and thence move on Leipsic. The remainder of the Allied force in Silesia, estimated at fifty thousand men, was to approach the Elbe, taking care to avoid a general action, and strive to pass that river between Torgau and Dresden, so as to unite with the army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, which by that means would be raised to one hundred and twenty thousand combatants.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the Protocol in Lond. 372, and St Cyr, Hist. Mil. iv. 347. Plötho, i. 386.

37.  
Disposal of the Austrian forces by this plan.

"In the event of circumstances rendering it indispensable to reinforce the Allied army in Bohemia, before the army in Silesia could effect its junction with that of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, then the army of Silesia was to march forthwith into Bohemia. The Austrian army, *united to the Allied forces*, shall debouch from Bohemia, either into Saxony, Silesia, or towards the Danube, as circumstances may require. Should the Emperor Napoleon, in order to anticipate the Allied army in Bohemia, move against it, in the first instance the army of the Prince-Royal shall endeavour, by forced marches, to throw itself upon his rear and communications. On the other hand, if the Emperor Napoleon should direct his attack against the army of the Prince-Royal, the grand Allied army is immediately to follow from Bohemia, to fall upon his communications, and give him battle. The general principle is, that the whole Allied armies shall, from the outset, assume the offensive; and the camp of the enemy shall be their place of rendezvous. The Russian army of reserve, under General Benningsen, shall forthwith advance from the Vistula, and move by Kalisch upon the Oder, in the direction of Glogau, in order to be at hand to act according to the same principles, and assist in the general attack upon the enemy if he remains in Silesia, or oppose his progress if he should attempt an incursion into Poland."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> St Cyr, iv. 348. Lond. 372.

Such was the memorable plan of operations drawn up

at Trachenberg, signed by the Allied sovereigns and the Prince-Royal of Sweden, on the part of Russia, Prussia, and Sweden, and conditionally, in the event of her mediation failing, by Austria. History, perhaps, affords no previous example of operations so vast, diffused over so wide a circle, and carried on by armies drawn from such remote and apparently unconnected empires, being combined with such judgment, and executed with such ability and perseverance. They required for their direction a rare degree of unanimity and prudence on the part of all the principal commanders, and could not prove successful unless carried into effect with the utmost zeal and unanimity on the part of the officers and soldiers of all the different nations employed. Dangers of the most formidable kind awaited the combined armies, if any false step was committed; for they acted on the circumference of an immense circle, with a great river, wholly in the hands of the enemy, flowing through its centre; and in the middle lay Napoleon, resting on six fortresses, and at the head of three hundred and fifty thousand effective men. At no earlier period of the war could it have been practicable to have combined the armies of three monarchies in concentric attacks against an enemy of such strength, possessing such a position, and led by such a commander. But times were now widely changed from what they had ever previously been. Experienced evil had allayed the jealousies of cabinets; universal suffering had roused the spirit of the people; repeated defeats had given wisdom to the generals who led them. Like Charles XII., Napoleon had taught his enemies how to beat him; and a disaster greater than Pultowa awaited him from the lessons which he had given them.

The determination of the cabinet of Vienna had been definitively taken at this period to join their forces to those of Russia and Prussia, if Napoleon refused the sweeping reductions in his empire which Metternich had proposed at the Dresden conference. It is proved by authentic state papers, that the motive which induced that astute diplomatist to propose the direct mediation of Austria in the end of June, and to urge the extension of the armistice till the 10th August, was to gain time for

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38.

Reflections  
on the ad-  
mirable  
wisdom in  
which they  
were con-  
ceived.

39.

Determina-  
tion of the  
cabinet of  
Vienna to  
join the  
Allies.

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July 9.

July 12.  
1 Schoell, x.  
257. Lond.  
368. Hard.  
xii. 184.

40.  
Austria signs  
the secret  
article of the  
treaty of  
Reichenbach.  
July 27.

the landwehr and Hungarian insurrection to be brought up from the distant provinces of the monarchy, to make head against the immense forces which Napoleon had so unexpectedly brought into action on the Elbe.\* Metternich now declared, "that the Emperor Francis's determination was to support the cause for which the Emperor Alexander had made such noble efforts." Agreeably to this determination, the Austrian government was a party to the operations agreed on at Trachenberg; and Bohemia was, with her approbation, made the great salient bastion from which the forces of the coalition were to issue forth against the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

And at length, when all hope of a pacific accommodation had vanished, and it had become evident that, with both parties, the renewal of hostilities was only a matter of prudence and time, the Emperor Francis permitted the signature of Austria to be affixed to the secret article of the treaty of Reichenbach, which had been expressly reserved for his sanction by Count Stadion, and in which it was stipulated, that "in the event of Austria taking a part in the war, she should receive £500,000 in bills upon London, and the like sum in military stores and equipments; that she should bring two hundred thousand men

\* In a military report by Prince Schwartzenberg to the Emperor Francis, dated 28th June, it was stated as a reason for prolonging the armistice—"The Bohemian army would be not more than entirely complete on the 20th June. The vast and unexpected preparations of France render an increased armament on the part of Austria necessary. Every unappropriated regiment of the line, the landwehr, and Hungarian insurrection, must be called out and put into activity. Even if the difficulty of clothing and arming them is got over, it is impossible to bring them to Znaim and Presburg, from the south-eastern provinces, before the 14th August, and the other troops in proportion. Besides the troops raised in Bavaria, sixty-six thousand under the Viceroy have crossed the Tagliamento, and large reserves are collecting at Würzburg and Fulda. As these measures menace Vienna, it is necessary to assemble a force at Klagenfurth, and near the capital, to counterbalance them. All this must be done without any detachments from the Bohemian army. Carriages cannot be got to supply Russia with the provisions she requires from Bohemia; and as the extension of the French line on the Elbe may render it necessary that part of the Allied force should move into that province, it is most desirable that there should be sufficient time for supplying such a force, and that in the mean time the wants of the Allies should be supplied from Galicia."—"Count Metternich's first and principal object in the negotiations at Dresden, in the end of June, was to urge the prolongation of the armistice till the 10th August, for the reasons stated in Prince Schwartzenberg's report. He was desirous also that Count Stadion should accompany the Emperor to Trachenberg, who was to be instructed to use his utmost to strengthen and decide the Prince-Royal to co-operate with the Allies. Count Metternich now declared that the Emperor Francis's determination was to support the cause for which the Emperor Alexander had made such noble efforts."—*Heads of the Arrangement touching the Armistice and Negotiations*; LONDONDERRY'S *War in Germany*, App. No. iii. p. 368.

into the field, and be restored to the condition in which she was in 1803, or, at any rate, at the peace of Presburg, and that the Pope should be reinstated in his dominions." This clause had been drawn up under Stadion's eyes in the treaty between Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, but without the direct authority of Austria, and the Emperor Francis long hesitated to sanction it; but at length, when all hope of peace had disappeared, he gave his consent on the 27th July, and thereby incorporated Austria with the Grand Alliance.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. xii. 184. Heads of arrangement touching armistices and negotiations. Lond. 368, Appendix, No. iii. Schoell, x. 257.

But although the accession of Austria to the league against France—though not yet announced to the world, and still veiled under the dubious guise of armed mediation—removed the greatest source of disquietude from the Allied sovereigns, yet they were not without serious uneasiness in another quarter. Bernadotte, indeed, had not hitherto failed in any of his engagements, and his interests were evidently wound up with the maintenance of the Russian power in the north of Europe, from which he was likely to derive such substantial advantages. But it was more than doubtful how he would act when the contest was removed to Germany, and when he was brought into conflict with his countrymen, his comrades, and his old commander. In truth, nothing could be more heterogeneous than the composition of his moral qualities, or strange than the political combinations in which he was at this time involved. A Frenchman by birth, he was now engaged in a war of life or death against France; a republican by principle, he was now deeply involved in a coalition of sovereigns against the child of the Revolution; a soldier of fortune under Napoleon, he now headed a powerful army against him; the heir to the throne of Sweden by election, he was now called on to shed the best blood of his people in a contest seemingly foreign to their immediate interests.<sup>2</sup>

41.  
Doubts regarding Bernadotte.

<sup>2</sup> Lond. 77, 78. Hard, xii. 181.

His character, able, indeed, and energetic, but vain, declamatory, and overbearing, afforded but little security against his conduct being influenced by some of the contending feelings arising out of so strange a combination; and yet the important position assigned him by the conferences of Trachenberg, and to which he was well entitled both by his military talents and political station, rendered

42.  
Especially from the failings of his character.

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it of the last importance that the Allies should be able to rely on his steady and sincere co-operation. When the military maps, indeed, were laid out before him, and the Prince-Royal had his scented white pocket-handkerchief in his hand, he descanted with equal animation and eloquence on the great military measures which were in contemplation; but, as was well observed at the time by one who knew him well,\* "He clothed himself in a pelisse of war, but his under garments were made of Swedish objects and peace." His zeal was always greatest in proportion as it appeared to be least necessary. A celebrated French actress, who had lately taken her departure from Stralsund for Vandamme's headquarters, gave rise to various surmises as to the Prince's secret communications with the French Emperor. His aversion to the Austrian alliance was openly expressed; he publicly aspired to the chief command in the armies of the confederacy; it was only by the most sedulous attention of the crowned heads at Trachenberg that he was rendered more tractable, and by the able and courteous efforts of Sir Charles Stewart, now Marquis of Londonderry, and General Pozzo di Borgo, who were attached on the part of the British and Russian governments to his headquarters, that he was retained during the campaign in a course in conformity with the great objects of the alliance.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 77,  
79. Hard.  
xii. 181, 182.

43.  
Composition  
of his army.

Whatever his secret inclinations may have been, however, Bernadotte faithfully discharged his obligations with respect to the troops which he brought into the field. They amounted to twenty-four thousand infantry, and four thousand cavalry—a very large force for a monarchy which did not at that period contain, after the loss of Finland, two millions and a half of inhabitants. Its composition, too, being drawn almost entirely from the rural population, where the want of labourers was strongly felt, while it rendered the troops more respectable, necessarily imposed upon the commander the duty of economising, as much as possible, blood so valuable to the nation. The leaders of this armament, Adlercrantz, Lowensheim, and others, were not only men of tried ability and valour, but ardently devoted to the cause of European independence; and although the rustic air and

\* Lord Londonderry.

uncombed locks of these Scandinavian warriors appeared to some disadvantage beside the Russian or Prussian guards, yet they were robust, fully clothed, and well armed; and they evinced, by their conduct in the campaign, that they had not degenerated in the elements of military spirit from their ancestors in the days of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. In addition to this, Bernadotte had under his command twenty-five thousand Hanoverian levies, in part composed of the veterans who had combated in former days under the English standard, and who now, clothed and equipped by British liberality, and headed by the gallant Walmoden, had already attained a surprising degree of efficiency, and burned with anxiety to avenge their country's wrongs in the blood of the enemy. Thirty-five thousand Prussians, in great part landwehr, under Bulow and Tauenzien, in the highest state of enthusiastic excitement; twelve thousand Russian veterans, under Woronzoff and Winzingerode; and six thousand German troops, paid by England, but in the Russian service, formed, after all deductions to the rear were taken into account, an army of ninety thousand effective men in the north of Germany, independent of a detached corps of twenty thousand which watched Hamburg. And this force, although heterogeneous, and drawn together from many different nations, was animated in common by the best spirit, and effected most important achievements in the course of the campaign.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. Etat  
des Forces  
Alliées, Lond.  
379; and 74,  
82.

The most experienced and powerful of all the divisions of the Allied forces, however, was that which was still cantoned in Silesia, and which, being composed of the veterans who had survived the Moscow campaign, and the Prussians who had withstood the shock of France at Lützen and Bautzen, might be relied upon for any emergencies, how trying soever. During the armistice, this noble army was raised to no less than a hundred and sixty thousand men; having been swelled to that amount, during the breathing-time afforded by that convention, by the incredible exertions of the Prussian government, the unbounded spirit of the Prussian people, and the great reinforcement, sixty thousand strong, which joined the Russian army after the fall of Thorn, and some lesser

44.  
Army of  
Silesia.

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fortresses on the Vistula. This immense force was at this period cantoned between Schweidnitz and the Oder; but a few days before the commencement of hostilities, one half of it, including the whole Russian and Prussian guards, in conformity with the plan laid down in the conferences of Trachenberg, moved into Bohemia, and joined the grand Austrian army there, leaving only eighty thousand under the command of the gallant Blucher, to maintain the war in Silesia. But this body, which embraced fifty thousand veteran Russians under Langeron, Sacken, and St Priest, and thirty thousand Prussians under Kleist, in the very highest state of discipline and equipment, and which possessed, besides, three hundred and fifty-six pieces of cannon, was animated with an invincible spirit; and its commanders exhibited that rare combination of military audacity with scientific calculation, which constitutes the mainspring of success in war.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bout.  
Camp. de  
1813, 3, 4.  
Lond. 379.  
Schoell, x.  
270.

45.  
Early history  
of Blucher.

BLUCHER, the commander-in-chief of this noble army, was a veteran now far advanced in years, but retaining, under the gray hairs of age, the whole fire and impetuosity of youth. He was born at Rostock in Mecklenburg, on the 16th December 1742, so that in 1813 he was upwards of seventy years of age. Descended of an old and respectable family of landed proprietors, he first entered the army as cornet in a troop of hussars, in the service of the King of Sweden, in 1757. His education, during the troubles of the Seven Years' War, had been neglected, a want which he never afterwards entirely recovered; but his vigour of character soon made him distinguished, and threw him into a more honourable career than could be afforded with the then unwarlike troops of Scandinavia. Made prisoner in 1760, in a skirmish, by the Prussian hussars, he immediately entered the service of the Great Frederick, and took an active part in the remaining years of that memorable contest, particularly at the battle of Kunnersdorf, in 1761. The long period which followed the treaty of peace in 1763, threw the young lieutenant into the usual follies and vices of idle military life; and between the sports of the field, the gambling-house, or still worse places of dissipation, he had little leisure to improve himself in the military art.



He was engaged in the contest with Poland in 1772; but his impetuous temper having led him into an unjustifiable act towards a Catholic priest, whom he had arrested and threatened with military execution, he was dismissed from the service by Frederick with these characteristic words, "Captain Blucher has got his congé, and may go to the devil!"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Biog. Univ.  
lviii. 375, 378.

His career, however, was not destined to be thus terminated. He shortly afterwards married, and was engaged for fourteen years in agricultural pursuits, by which his fortune was greatly augmented. His passion for war, however, was not extinguished by this rural retirement. In 1786, he again entered the Prussian army in his old regiment of hussars; four years afterwards he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and in 1792 distinguished himself by his intrepidity during the invasion of Champagne by the Duke of Brunswick. In the campaign of 1794, he won additional distinction in the combat of Kaiserslautern. It was not till 1806, however, that he was called to a theatre worthy of his talents. He was engaged in the disastrous battle of Auerstadt; and although the cavalry which he commanded were overthrown during a charge in that battle, by the terrible artillery of the French, yet he amply redeemed his credit by the activity with which he gathered together the scattered remains of the army after the disaster, and the heroic courage with which he defended himself at the assault of Lübeck. Taken prisoner there, he was sent to Hamburg, where he consoled himself, amidst the humiliation of his country, by visions of its future resurrection and glory.\* He afterwards was a member of the secret society of the Tugendbund, awaiting in silence the moment of deliverance. Called to the head of the army in 1813, he evinced the ardour of the sentiments with which he was inspired by the following proclamation to the Saxons:—"The God of armies has in the east of Europe pronounced a terrible sentence; and the angel of death has, by the sword, cold, and famine, cut off five hundred thousand of the strangers who, in the presumption of their prosperity, sought to subjugate it."<sup>2</sup> We go where the finger of Providence directs us, to combat for the security of ancient thrones,

46.  
First exploits  
in arms.

<sup>2</sup> Schoell, iv.  
336. Biog.  
Univ. lviii.  
375, 382.

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47.  
His character.

for the present independence of nations, and to usher in the dawn of a brighter day."

A true Goth by temperament and complexion, with light flowing hair scattered over his bald forehead, blue eyes, huge flaxen mustaches, and an aquiline countenance, he realised the image of those northern warriors who combated under Arminius with the legions of Rome, or arrested on the Elbe under Witikind the bloody torrent of Charlemagne's conquests. Originally a hussar officer, he always retained the ardent character which suits that branch of the military service: the habits then acquired never afterwards deserted him; and in the close of his career on the field of Ligny, when commander-in-chief of eighty thousand mén, he headed a charge of dragoons against the French cuirassiers with as much alacrity as he would have done at twenty-five, and well-nigh perished in the shock. Impetuous and unruly in his desires, he was through life an ardent votary of pleasure; and the attractions of wine, women, and play, chiefly filled up, during intervals of rest, the passions of a mind to which, by nature and habit, violent excitement had become indispensable. But it was the necessity of strong sensation, not selfishness of disposition, which was the cause of these irregularities; and though he indulged in them at times to the close of life, and might be seen at Paris, in 1814, rising from copious libations of champagne to indulge in the excitement of *rouge et noir*, he was yet ever ready to exchange these unworthy pursuits for the more honourable and yet stronger excitement of the field.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Personal observation.

48.  
And military qualities.

Vehement, irascible, and often imprudent, he was yet an ardent patriot. A true German in his heart, his whole soul was wound up in the welfare of the Fatherland; alone, of all his contemporaries, he distinctly predicted, amidst the disasters of 1806, the future deliverance of his country; deeply implicated in the Tugendbund, he waited only, during the succeeding years of bondage, the moment of retribution. When Frederick William at length raised the standard of independence, he was the first to draw his sword in its behalf. He could not be said to be a great general, though few commanders have achieved more important or glorious victories. The ardour of his disposition, and overflowing impetuosity of his

courage, induced him, like Murat, to court danger wherever it was to be found, rather than avert disaster from wherever it threatened. He preferred seeking "the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth," to waiting by patience and combination the tardier honours of the general. But he possessed, at the same time, the rapid glance, quick decision, and moral courage, which constitute such important elements in the character of a commander; like Suwaroff, he always struck home to the centre of the enemy's force, and never wasted his strength on their extremities. He was unrivalled in the tenacity with which he clung to his projects, and the vigour with which he repaired, in an incredibly short space of time, the most serious disasters. Many of the movements which he executed, particularly the passage of the Elbe, the battle of the Katzbach, and the cross march from Ligny to Waterloo, which, if he did not originate, he at least adopted, were not only characterised by military genius of the highest order, but produced the most decisive effect upon the issue of the war.

What was wanting in prudence and circumspection for the ordinary duties of a general in the commander-in-chief, was amply compensated by the admirable talents and scientific acquirements of his chief of the staff, General GNEISENAU. This able man, though much younger than Blücher, was endowed with all the foresight, accuracy, and comprehensive views which are, in the long run, indispensable for the successful conduct of a great army. He was born at Schilda, near Torgau, on the 28th October 1760, so that he was nearly twenty years younger than his veteran commander, and was now fifty-three years of age. From his earliest years he evinced the strongest turn for military affairs; but his impetuous turn of mind, as is often the case in Germany, broke out at the university. He was obliged to leave the college of Erfurth on account of a duel with a tradesman, and soon after entered the Austrian service under Marshal Wurmser. But here he got involved in another duel, and was compelled to leave that service; and his father, on account of these repeated scrapes, having forbidden him his house, he became desperate, and joined the troops which the Margrave of Anspach, in 1780, sent out to America.

49.  
General  
Gneisenau :  
his birth and  
early history.

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<sup>1</sup> Biog. Univ.  
Sup. lxxv. 436.50.  
His first  
services in  
Europe.

These misfortunes cooled down his impetuous disposition; repentant letters from America reconciled him to his father; and in three years this second prodigal returned to his country and paternal home, where he soon entered the Prussian service as a captain of fusiliers.<sup>1</sup>

In 1793 and 1794 he was engaged with distinction in the Polish war; in 1796 he married, and from that time devoted himself, with the most intense ardour, to the study of the military art. In the war of 1806 he was engaged in the bloody skirmish, at the outset of the campaign, in which Prince Louis fell; and after the prostration of Prussia, maintained himself with the most heroic resolution in Colberg, till the peace of Tilsit found him, still unconquered, within its walls. He then entered the civil service of government; but under pretence of discontent passed over to England, where he was engaged in secret political transactions, in which capacity he made frequent journeys in 1813 to Vienna, St Petersburg, and Stockholm. No sooner had the disasters of Moscow broken out, than he renewed his conferences with the English government, and immediately embarking for Germany, repaired to Breslau, where he was appointed quartermaster-general of Blücher's corps. He then laboured assiduously with Stein and Scharnhorst in the organisation of the Tugendbund, which spread so far the elements of resistance to France. It was under his direction that the retreat of the Prussians was conducted with so much skill from Lützen to Breslau; and so highly were his abilities now appreciated, that on the resumption of hostilities he was made chief of the staff to Blücher, in room of Scharnhorst, who had died of his wounds received at Lützen, which office he held till the final termination of the war by the battle of Waterloo.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Biog. Univ.  
Sup. lxxv. 436,  
437.51.  
His character  
as a general.

Thoroughly acquainted with the art of war, a perfect master of strategy, and invariably accurate in his estimate of distances and the march of troops, he infused a degree of correctness and precision into the movements of the army of Silesia, which enabled it to inflict the most terrible blows upon the enemy, without sustaining any serious losses itself. Europe was astonished at the admirable skill with which, during that whole campaign, the movements of this important army were conducted;

yielding ground, where Napoleon pressed on them in person with superior forces; returning again to the offensive, the moment that the eagles of the Imperial Guard were seen receding in the distance; sacrificing on every occasion the lustre of separate achievements to the promotion of general objects; and constantly following out, amidst the intricacies of their own movements, the leading plan of operations agreed on by the Allied sovereigns. Without detracting from the great services of Marshal Blücher in that eventful contest, it may safely be affirmed, that the chief merit of it, at least so far as the general conduct of the campaign is concerned, as well as of the contest in France in 1814, and the guidance of the Prussian force in 1815, is due to General Gneisenau; and—what is very remarkable—in combating the modern Hannibal, the Marcellus of the Allies was found under the gray locks of the Prussian veteran, and the Fabius in the more youthful breast of his gifted lieutenant.

No jealousy whatever marred the cordial co-operation of these illustrious chiefs—a sure sign, considering the delicate situation which the veteran held under the guidance of his comparatively youthful Mentor, that they were both great men. “When we wished to beat the French,” said Blücher, “I rode out with Gneisenau; and we went to see how these carls (Kerls) were placed. Then I would say to him—‘What would you think if we were to move in such and such a way?’ and in less than an hour the orders were given.” The destruction of the French army on the Katzbach, the passage of the Elbe, and the battle of Mockern, near Leipsic, were in great measure owing to his judicious counsels. He had a great part, also, in the bold advance towards Paris in 1814, which brought about the fall of Napoleon; and never was more rejoiced than when his unlooked-for return stilled the discord among the Allies at the Congress of Vienna, and gave him another opportunity of striking a blow at the power of France. He directed the retreat at Ligny, after Blücher was disabled by the fall of his horse, and had a principal share in the decisive cross march on the 18th to Waterloo, which, with the valour of the English army, terminated the contest.<sup>1</sup>

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52.

Striking concord which existed between him and Blücher.

<sup>1</sup> Biog. Univ.  
lxv. 437.

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53.

The Austrian  
army at  
Prague.

The grand Austrian army, under the command of Prince Schwartzberg, cantoned in the neighbourhood of Prague, consisted of a hundred and twenty thousand men, great part of whom were in an incomparable state of discipline and efficiency. It was divided into four corps, commanded by Count Coloredo, General Chastellar, and afterwards General Meerfeldt, General Giulay, and Count Klenau; while Prince Hesse-Homburg was at the head of the reserve, and General Bubna of the detached corps. Parts of this force, however—in particular, the infantry of Klenau's corps—were newly raised, and hardly as yet capable of withstanding the shock of Napoleon's legions; and though the artillerymen were scientific and expert, the horses for the guns and waggon train were greatly inferior to those of the Russians, and little adequate to the fatigues of a protracted and active campaign. Very different, however, was the aspect of the cavalry. This force numbered twenty thousand admirable horse: the cuirassiers and hussars of the guard, in particular, outshone any in Europe in the splendour of their appearance, the quality of their horses, and the brilliancy of their appointments; and their achievements on the field of Leipsic were worthy of their high renown and martial aspect. When the elite of this immense force was reviewed in the neighbourhood of Prague by the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia in the middle of August, immediately after the resumption of hostilities, to the number of seventy-seven thousand infantry, and eight thousand horse, with three hundred and eighty pieces of cannon, it presented an array rarely paralleled in Europe, and formed a military spectacle of unrivalled sublimity. The cuirassiers on this interesting occasion were presented with new standards; and when the three sovereigns nailed, in unison, their colours to the poles in token of their firm alliance, it seemed as if no power on earth could resist a league of potentates, one only of whom could summon up so noble an array.<sup>1</sup>

Aug. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 106.  
Ploto, ii.  
App. No. iv.  
Fain, ii. 231.

PRINCE SCHWARTZENBERG, who commanded the Austrian force, and afterwards obtained the general direction of the Allied armies, though far from being a general of the highest order, was nevertheless in many respects well qualified for the arduous duties with which he was

intrusted. It was no easy matter, as he himself said, to command an army when kings and emperors were at headquarters; and probably there was no man in all the Imperial service who could have discharged that arduous and delicate duty so well as himself. Without possessing any great force of mind, or decision of character, he was yet admirably fitted, by the suavity of his manners, the prudence of his disposition, and the amenity of his temper, to allay the jealousies, and keep together the often discordant powers of the alliance. Descended of a noble family; habituated from his youth to the very highest society; and personally known, both as a diplomatist and a commander, to most of the leading persons at the headquarters of the Allies; he possessed at the same time the prudent temper and conciliatory disposition which, in dealing with such exalted personages, were fitted to prevent any serious dissensions arising among them, and yet preserve, upon the whole, the even tenor of his own intentions.<sup>1</sup>

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54.

Prince  
Schwartz-  
enberg, his  
character.

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 97.  
Fain, ii. 242

His combinations were judicious, often able and comprehensive, but he wanted the decision requisite for carrying them into execution; and more than once, particularly at Dresden in 1813, and in Champagne in 1814, when he had brought Napoleon, by his well conceived measures, to the very brink of destruction, he failed in effecting his object by want of vigour, at the decisive moment, in carrying them into execution. For the bold measures which in the end hurled the French Emperor from the throne, we are indebted to the indomitable moral courage of Lord Castlereagh, and the noble decision of the Emperor Alexander. Schwartzenberg's measures were of a more temporising and prudent character; and he more than once seriously endangered the Allied cause by his ready recurrence to the favourite Austrian step of a retreat. Yet justice must observe, that the powers even of the generalissimo of the Allied armies were far from being of an unlimited character. The Aulic Council, now transported to the very theatre of action, exercised a secret and sometimes prejudicial control over its operations; diplomacy often interposed its obstructions, and asserted its supremacy in the most critical moments; and even when he was most unfettered,<sup>2</sup> the power of indivi-

55.

His tempo-  
rising char-  
acter.

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii.  
242. Sir R.  
Wilson,  
Power of  
Russia, 39.  
Lond. 97.

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dual direction was generally as much restricted as the responsibility of the generalissimo was increased, by the nature of a contest which had never less than two, sometimes three, of the greatest crowned heads in Europe at the military headquarters.

56.  
Resumé of  
the Allied  
forces in  
action on the  
Elbe.

The grand army of Bohemia, after eighty thousand of the Russians and Prussians had joined it, formed a mass of above two hundred and twenty thousand combatants, of whom forty thousand were admirable horse, with seven hundred pieces of cannon, which, from the salient bastion of Bohemia, threatened the rear and communications of the French Emperor on the Elbe. This, with eighty thousand pressing on him from Silesia, and ninety thousand from the north, composed a force of nearly four hundred thousand men, ready for instant operation in the field, all acting under one direction, in a concentric circle, upon one central point. The forces, therefore, at the outset of the campaign, were very nearly balanced; and Napoleon's central position astride on the Elbe, at the head of three hundred and fifty thousand effective men, and with six fortresses on that river in his hands, might seem more than sufficient to counterbalance all the enthusiasm which animated the enemy's troops. But this was by no means the whole of the military array which the Allied sovereigns had at their disposal; and it was evident that, if the contest were protracted for any time, the forces of the coalition would acquire a decisive preponderance against him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Plotho,  
App. No. 3,  
vol. ii.  
Schoell, x.  
268. Hård.  
xii. 219, 220.

57.  
Reserves to  
which each  
party had to  
look.

The military force of France was exhausted; not two thousand troops remained even in the barracks of Paris—a force scarcely equal to the daily service of the metropolis; and the depots in the interior had sent off their last man.\* On the other hand, vast reinforcements were preparing, and might ere long be expected within the Allied lines. Benningsen was organising a large army of seventy thousand Russians in the interior of Poland, which, it was calculated, would join the Allied forces on the Elbe in the first week of September—the last reserve, it is true, of the Muscovite empire, but one to which Napoleon had

\* "Paris and the neighbouring departments had not at that period more than 2000 troops, veterans and gendarmes included."—*Recueil des Lettres Interceptées en 1813*, p. 13; and FARN, ii. 356.



nothing additional on his side to oppose. Twenty thousand men watched the combined force of Danes and French conscripts which Davoust commanded at Hamburg; and the total amount of Russian and Prussian forces, which blockaded the fortresses that still held out for Napoleon on the Oder and the Vistula, amounted to the enormous number of one hundred thousand men. Thus the total Allied force accumulated in Poland and the north of Germany, was nearly six hundred thousand men; and although only two-thirds of this immense force, or four hundred thousand combatants, could be relied on for the shock of war on the Elbe, yet the remainder would in the end prove available, when the eighty thousand French veterans, who were now shut up in the fortresses on the Oder and Vistula, had yielded beneath the pangs of hunger, or the ravages of disease.<sup>1</sup>

Immense as the forces were which were thus arrayed against each other on the banks of the Elbe, they did not compose the whole of those which were drawn forth by the contending parties in this gigantic conflict. Five-and-twenty thousand Austrians, in addition, were assembled, under the Prince de Reuss, at Lintz, on the Danube, to observe the motions of Wrede, who was at the head of twenty-six thousand Bavarians in the neighbourhood of Munich; while Hiller, with fifty thousand excellent troops, and one hundred and ninety-eight guns, was prepared to cross the Isonzo, and renew the conflict on the Italian plains with the Viceroy, who had arrayed sixty thousand combatants on the banks of the Tagliamento and the Adige. In addition to this, an army of reserve was forming between Vienna and Presburg, under the Grand-duke Ferdinand of Würtemberg, which was to be raised to sixty thousand men from the distant resources of Hungary and Transylvania, which had not yet arrived at the theatre of war; making a total of seven hundred and thirty thousand combatants who obeyed the orders of the conference of Trachenberg. If to this be added a hundred and twenty thousand men, who, at this period, were preparing, under the standards of Wellington, to cross the Pyrenees, where Soult, with eighty thousand, was intrenched to resist them, and forty-five thousand Allied troops in Catalonia, who pressed on an

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<sup>1</sup> Plotho, ii.  
App. iii.  
Schoell, x.  
268, 271.  
Hard. xii.  
220.

58.  
Forces on  
both sides on  
the Bavarian  
and Italian  
frontiers.

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<sup>1</sup> Plotho, ii.  
App. iii.  
Hard. xii.  
219, 220.  
Schoell, x.  
270, 272.  
Jom. iv. 360,  
361.

equal force under Marshal Suchet—the general result will be, that NINE HUNDRED THOUSAND men in arms encircled the French empire, which was still defended by SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND who followed the fortunes of the Revolution.\* But if the central situation of the French is considered, and the advantages which they derived from unity of command and comparative homogeneity of race, as well as the talents and reputation of their chief, it can hardly be said that Napoleon was overmatched in the field, save from the effects of the unbounded enthusiasm and exasperation which his own oppression had excited among his enemies.<sup>1</sup>

59.  
Cordial spirit  
of unanimity  
with which  
the Allied  
Powers were  
animated.

The whole of the Allied armies in Germany were animated by the highest spirit, and inspired with the most touching cordiality. The feeling of depression by which the Russians were animated when, in the outset of the campaign, they found themselves far advanced in Europe, and engaged in a fresh war, which seemed foreign to the real interests of their country, had given place to an universal and enthusiastic desire to share with their Prussian brethren in the deliverance of the Fatherland. Common dangers had awakened brotherly feelings; common injuries a joint desire of vengeance; valour on both sides, mutual respect. Those who had stood side by side on the fields of Lützen and Bautzen, felt confident against the world in arms. The universal animation with which the war was embraced by all classes in Germany, had excited a corresponding enthusiasm in the Russian warriors; the generous flame had spread to every breast; and such was the warlike spirit with which they were animated, that it was with no small difficulty, and only by the personal exertions of the Allied sovereigns, that they could be prevented from breaking into open hostilities on the expiration of the original period assigned for the armistice. The Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia set the example of this touching fraternity: constantly living together on terms of the closest intimacy, they had not a thought nor a wish save in common;<sup>2</sup> their

<sup>2</sup> Lond. 75,  
76. Capet. x.  
159, 160.

\* See App. A, Chap. lxxix, where the whole particulars of this immense force are given from the official states, published by the German author Plotho, and the nearest approximation that can be formed to those of the French, amidst the incessant efforts they have made to diminish their real numbers in a campaign so prolific in disasters to their arms.

suites formed one large family : and when they reviewed their respective troops, they always appeared in the uniform of each other's guards, and with the military orders hanging on their breasts, which were shared by them with the humblest of their soldiers.

When preparations on so vast and unprecedented a scale had been made on both sides for the resumption of hostilities, it becomes almost ludicrous to follow out the diplomatic evasions, trifling disputes, and studied procrastination, of the congress of Prague. Official intimation was sent to the French Emperor on the 11th July, by M. Metternich, that the Allied sovereigns had agreed to the prolongation of the armistice, and had sent their plenipotentiaries to that city ; viz. M. d'Anstett on the part of Russia, and M. de Humboldt\* on that of Prussia, while Metternich himself represented Austria ; and these high functionaries all arrived there on the 15th. Instead, however, of straightway complying with this intimation, and sending his own plenipotentiaries to commence business, Napoleon, when every hour was precious, commenced an altercation with the Prussian and Russian governments upon the choice they had made of representatives to the congress ; objecting to M. d'Anstett that he was a French emigrant, and to M. de Humboldt that he was not of adequate rank to meet either with Count Narbonne or M. Caulaincourt. These objections came with a peculiarly bad grace from the head of the revolutionary dynasty ;<sup>1</sup> and certainly Humboldt,

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60.

Slow progress  
of the nego-  
tiations at  
Prague.

July 12.

August 7.

<sup>1</sup> Metternich  
to Maret,  
July 12, 1813.  
Fain, ii. 152.  
Anstett to  
Metternich,  
Aug. 7, 1813.  
Capef. x. 150.

\* Charles William, Baron von Humboldt, was born at Berlin in 1767. Frederick Henry Alexander, his brother, the illustrious naturalist, came into the world two years later. The eldest commenced his education at the university of Jena, where he formed the acquaintance of Schiller, the immortal poet, with whom ever after, through life, he maintained an intimate correspondence. He united in his person the diplomatic and philosophic character ; and in that double capacity was intrusted, in 1797, with a secret mission to Paris, the object of which was to report to the cabinet of Berlin the real state of France under the Directory. He next became the Prussian Resident at Rome, and after a residence of three years in the eternal city he was recalled to Berlin, where he was placed at the head of the Department of Public Instruction. It was at the very same time that his brother Alexander set out on the Travels, which his genius and learning have rendered so interesting, in the New World. Though at first inclined, as most men of deep and enlarged sympathies are in the outset of life, to liberal opinions, he had now become decidedly national and conservative in his politics ; and as the subjection of Prussia to French influence had long been the subject of his profound regret, it became necessary, when that subjection was changed into temporary servitude by the treaty of Tilsit, for him to retire for a season from public life. He withdrew, accordingly, to his country seat of Tigel, in the neighbourhood of Berlin, where he was for some years entirely immersed, to appearance, in scientific and literary pursuits ; and in these he acquired deserved distinction, especially by his Essays on the

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brother to the illustrious naturalist, and of an old family, was on a level with M. Maret,\* or Caulaincourt, neither of

Tragic Muse. But during all this time his heart was in the cause of Germany; he was connected with the secret societies which prepared the minds of the people for its deliverance; and none looked forward more ardently for the appointed hour when the great conflict was to commence. It was from his known constancy to these views that in 1810, after Austria, by her glorious efforts in the preceding year, had sufficiently demonstrated her sincerity in the cause, that he was sent as Ambassador of Prussia to Vienna. His situation there, constantly watched as he was by the agents of Napoleon, was one of uncommon delicacy and difficulty; but he discharged its duties with equal judgment and address. When the war of Independence, in 1813, broke out in the north of Germany, he was of infinite use at the Imperial court in supporting the views of Prince Hardenberg, and overcoming the hesitation of the cabinet of Vienna, produced by the advantages of the French family alliance on the one hand, and the ardent feelings of German nationality in the empire on the other. His correspondence with Prince Hardenberg, at this period, is one of the most able and interesting portions of the records of European diplomacy. His diplomatic situation at Vienna led to his being appointed the chief diplomatist on the part of Prussia in the congress of Prague; he subsequently took part in the congress of Chatillon; signed, with Hardenberg, the treaty of Paris; and was actively employed in the congress of Vienna, when the difficult question relative to Saxony was mainly committed to his direction. See CAPEFUGUE, *Diplomates Européens*, iii. 70, 83; *Biog. des Hommes Vivants*, iii. 432, 433.

\* Hughes Bernard Maret, afterwards Duke of Bassano, was born at Dijon in 1763. His family belonged to the burgher class: his father was a medical practitioner of some repute in that city. He received a good education at its academy, and first acquired distinction in the competition for the prize for an *Eloge* of Vauban, given by the States of Burgundy, which Carnot obtained. Maret's Essay, however, had considerable merit, and procured for him an introduction to M. De Vergennes, then minister of state, who was about to introduce him into the diplomatic line, when the Revolution called him to other destinies.

From its commencement he was one of the short-hand writers who took down the speeches of the orators, and afterwards reduced them into the form in which they were published; and the immense collection entitled "*Bulletins de l'Assemblée Nationale*," was in great part the fruit of his labours. It is well known that many eminent men in England have begun their career in the same character of reporters. This avocation soon introduced young Maret, then twenty-six years of age, to Mirabeau, Clermont Tonnerre, and the other popular orators in the Constituent Assembly. He was introduced by them to the club "*Des Amis de la Constitution*," and afterwards joined that of the Jacobins; but finding their tumultuous debates little suited to his taste, he entered the career of diplomacy to which he had been destined by M. de Vergennes. There he soon rose to eminence. He was first sent as secretary of legation by the Girondist ministry to Hamburg, and then to Brussels, where he warmly entered into their projects of propagandism. He was the mouth-piece of Dumourier, and was by him despatched on a secret mission to London in 1792. When war broke out with England, he quitted London in February 1793, with M. De Chauvelin, and was soon after sent on various diplomatic missions in Italy, Switzerland, and the Illyrian provinces, which he executed with great address. He acted an important part under the Directory in the foreign office of Paris, and then found time to write a tragedy of very mediocre merit. In 1799 he took an active part in the intrigues which prepared the way for the accession of Napoleon to the consular throne, and, the moment the victorious general obtained it, became the right-hand man of his diplomacy, which he continued to be till the empire was overturned. More even than Talleyrand, he was the organ of the Emperor's diplomatic labours, for he had an invaluable quality for government: he had no ideas of his own. His original vocation of a short-hand writer never forsook him. He was an admirable expounder of the ideas of others. With equal readiness he developed the revolutionary projects of the Girondists, the imbecile intrigues of the Directory, and the despotic commands of Napoleon. There is scarcely a diplomatic act of the Emperor's, from the 18th Brumaire to the battle of Waterloo, with which the name of Maret is not associated. He was an honourable man, however, and though entirely destitute of original ideas, had great talents for working out those of others. On Napoleon's fall he evinced a noble devotion by adhering to his ruined fortunes at Fontainebleau; and through

whom had any pretensions to descent; and they were accordingly, after much angry correspondence, finally overruled, and the negotiations carried on with the existing diplomatists.

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No sooner, however, was this difficulty surmounted, and Narbonne and Caulaincourt both arrived at Prague, where they were not installed till the 28th, sixteen days after the arrival of the Allied diplomatists, than a new and still more serious cause of dissension arose regarding the *form* in which the negotiations should be conducted. Metternich contended, that they should proceed after the manner of the congress of Tetschen in 1779; that is, that the negotiations should be conducted by means of written notes, addressed, not by the belligerent parties to each other, but by both to the mediating power, and by it transmitted to the plenipotentiary of the power for whom they were respectively intended. To this proposition the Allied diplomatists at once gave their consent; but the French strenuously contended for the course pursued at the congress of Utrecht, where both parties sent their notes directly to each other, and the communications were carried on, partly in writing, and partly verbally. It is evident that the former method was calculated to increase the importance and influence of the mediating power, by enabling it to keep in its hands the thread of the whole negotiations; and it is equally plain, that when parties are really in earnest, and time, as in this instance, presses, it is far more expedient to proceed at once to personal intercourse and verbal conferences, than to adopt the circuitous form of written communications addressed to a third party. Austria, therefore, by contending for the latter course, clearly evinced her desire to procrastinate. But it is equally plain, that if France had been sincere in the desire of an accommodation, she would have preferred the commencement of negotiations in any conceivable method, to the prolongation of unmeaning discussions about their form. In this dispute about the mode of conducting the conferences,<sup>1</sup> the whole short remainder of the period assigned for the prolongation of

61.  
Difficulties  
which arose  
respecting the  
form of the  
conference.

<sup>1</sup> See Official  
Corresp. in  
Fain, ii. 200;  
and Capef. x  
155, 156.

life he was distinguished by kindness and disinterestedness of disposition, which were the more remarkable from the contrast they afforded to the selfishness and egotism with which he was surrounded. See CAPEFIGUE *Diplomates Européens*, 162-196, and *Biographie des Hommes Vivants*, iv. 334-336, (MARET.)

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the armistice was consumed; and the 10th August, the fatal period fixed for its termination, passed without either any commencement having been effected of a negotiation, or any proposal made for its longer continuance.

62.  
Real views  
of the differ-  
ent powers  
at this period.

It is incorrect, however, to say that neither party in this armistice wished for a termination of hostilities. Both parties, in reality, desired it; but both were alike aware that the terms on which they were willing to come to an accommodation, were such as there was no prospect of attaining. Austria was not only willing, but anxious to mediate with efficacy, and bring about a general accommodation; but then it was on condition that she obtained the Illyrian provinces and a share of Italy for herself, and the renunciation by France of the Confederation of the Rhine and the kingdom of Italy, for the cause of European independence. Russia and Prussia were ready to terminate hostilities; but it was on condition that Prussia was restored and augmented, the kingdom of Poland dissolved, and the Hanse Towns restored to freedom. France was prepared to renounce some of her acquisitions, and sheath for a time, at least, the sword of conquest; but she could contemplate no greater abasement than the restitution of the Illyrian provinces to Austria, of her lost provinces to Prussia, and the dissolution of the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, to soothe Russia. Napoleon still clung to the Rhenish Confederacy, the Swiss supremacy, the kingdom of Italy, the Peninsular and the Westphalian thrones, and the extension of the French frontier to include Holland and the Hanse Towns. Thus, though all parties were willing to negotiate, none were sufficiently lowered in their pretensions to render an understanding practicable; the victories of twenty years could not be obliterated by a single disaster, how great soever; and, as in the conferences between the Gauls and Romans of old, the sword required to be thrown in to restore the balance.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Capef. x.  
153, 154.  
Fain, ii. 92,  
93.

63.  
Napoleon's  
Journey to  
Mayence, to  
meet Marie  
Louise.

Napoleon himself gave the clearest sense of the hopelessness of all attempts at a pacification, by a step which at once dissolved all the expectations which had been entertained at Dresden of a speedy termination of hostilities. On the 26th July, three days before the French plenipotentiaries, Caulaincourt and Maret, had come to Prague, though

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a fortnight after those of the Allies had been in that city, and seven weeks after the commencement of the armistice, Napoleon set out from Dresden for Mayence, to inspect the fortifications in progress at that place, and to meet the Empress Marie Louise, who, by his directions, had come to meet him in that frontier city. He remained with her for six days, during which the most active military preparations were going forward, and every thing announced the speedy resumption of hostilities. What the communications were which passed between him and the Empress-Regent during this momentous period, is now known by the best possible evidence, that of the Empress herself. "Associated," said she to the senate, "in that short interview, with the most secret thoughts of the Emperor, I then perceived with what sentiments he would be inspired if seated on a dishonoured throne, and under a crown without glory." In these words were truly revealed the most secret feelings of Napoleon. Seated on a revolutionary throne, and the head of a military republic, he was compelled to advance without intermission; unbroken success was to him not merely essential to popularity, but the price of existence. He was much pressed at Mayence by the Empress and senate to make peace on any terms; but his answer, in three words, conveyed the whole secret of his policy during the remainder of his reign, "*Tout ou rien*." \* The Emperor spent six days at that place, inspecting the fortifications and reviewing the troops, which were incessantly urged on to swell the roll of Augereau's corps, and on the 3d August returned to Dresden, where the increased vigour of his military preparations at all points, and the prodigious concourse of troops who incessantly poured into that capital, soon dispelled the hopes which had till then been entertained of a general peace.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
23, 24.  
Odel. i. 228,  
231. Capet.  
x. 153, 154.  
Lond. 108,  
note.

The day after Napoleon returned from Mayence he wrote a confidential letter to the Emperor of Austria, a copy of which was communicated to Metternich, desiring to know, in a categorical manner, how the cabinet of Vienna proposed that peace should be arranged, and

64.  
Ultimatum of  
Austria to  
France.

\* The very expression used by Sieyès as the watchword of the Revolution at its commencement.—*Vide Ante*, Chap. iii. § 117, note. How identical was its spirit at bottom through all the different phases it assumed.

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
93, 94. Hard.  
xii. 205, 206.

65.  
Napoleon's  
answer,  
which de-  
clines these  
terms.

whether, in the event of hostilities, she would make common cause with France. This led to more substantial overtures; and on the 7th August Metternich transmitted the ultimatum of his cabinet, which was as follows:—"The dissolution of the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, which was to be divided between Russia, Austria, and Prussia, reserving Dantzic for the latter power; the re-establishment of Hamburg and the Hanse Towns in their independence; the reinstatement of Prussia in its ancient possessions, with a frontier on the Elbe; the cession to Austria of all the Illyrian provinces, including Trieste." These were the cardinal points; but the Austrian diplomatist stated as minor questions, which would require to be adjusted in a general pacification, the independence of Holland, of Spain, and of the Pontifical States.<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon spent the 9th in deliberating, and on the 10th returned an answer, consenting to the dissolution of the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, but insisting that Dantzic should be a free city, its fortifications demolished, and the King of Saxony indemnified by the acquisition of the territories included in Saxony, belonging to Silesia and Bohemia. He agreed to cede the Illyrian provinces to Austria, with Fiume, but refused to give up Trieste; the Confederation of the Rhine was to be extended to the Oder, and the integrity of the Danish dominions guaranteed. These terms were despatched in duplicate to Prague, where they arrived early on the morning of the 11th; but after twelve o'clock on the preceding night, which was the termination of the armistice. They were not such, however, as Austria could agree to; and the armistice having now expired without any accommodation having been come to, the Russian and Prussian plenipotentiaries, at midnight on the 10th, addressed official intimations to Metternich, that their powers were at an end, and the congress dissolved. On the 11th the Austrian minister announced these communications to Caulaincourt and Narbonne, and on the day following Austria declared war against France.

The grounds stated in this official instrument, on the part of the cabinet of Vienna, for joining the Allies, and coming to a rupture with France, were as follows:—"The

Aug. 10.

Aug. 11.

Aug. 12.



progress of events at the congress left no room for doubt that the French government was insincere in its professions of a desire for peace. The delay in the arrival of the French plenipotentiaries, under pretexts which the great objects to be discussed at the congress might well have reduced to silence; the insufficiency of their instructions on points of form, which occasioned the loss of much precious time, when a few days only remained for the most important of all negotiations: all these circumstances combined demonstrated too clearly that peace, such as Austria and the Allied sovereigns desired, was foreign to the views of France; that she accepted the form of a congress, in order to avoid the reproach of being the cause of the prolongation of war, but with a secret desire to elude its effects, or in the wish to separate Austria from the other powers already united with her in principle, before treaties had consecrated their union for the cause of peace and the happiness of the world. Austria comes out of this negotiation, the result of which has deceived her most cherished hopes, with the consciousness of the good faith which has animated her throughout. More zealous than ever for the noble end which she has proposed, she only takes up arms to attain it, in concert with the powers which are animated by the same sentiments. Ever disposed to aid in the establishment of an order of things, which, by a wise division of power, may place the preservation of peace under the shield of an association of independent states, she will neglect no occasion for arriving at such a result; and the knowledge she has acquired of the courts now become her allies, gives her a certain assurance that they will sincerely co-operate for the attainment of so salutary an end."<sup>1</sup>

To this it was replied on the part of the French Emperor:—"Ever since the month of February, the hostile dispositions of the cabinet of Vienna have been known to all Europe. Denmark, Saxony, Bavaria, Würtemberg, have documents in their archives which prove that Austria, under pretence of the interest which she took in her allies, and of the love of peace, nourished a secret jealousy of France. The undersigned will not go over the system of protestations, so prodigally made on the one

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66.

Austrian  
manifesto.

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
212, 216.  
Declaration  
of Austria.

67.

Reply of  
France.  
Aug. 18.

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hand, and of insinuations, covertly spread on the other, which the cabinet of Vienna has adopted, and which, when fully developed, has prostituted what has hitherto been reckoned most sacred among men—a mediation, a congress, and the words of peace. If Austria desire hostility, what need had she of a false language, or of enveloping France in the tissue of deceitful snares which met her on every side? If the mediator really wished for peace, would he have pretended that transactions so complicated could be adjusted in the space of fifteen or twenty days? Is it an indication of a pacific disposition to propose to dictate peace to France in less time than it would require to conclude the capitulation of a besieged town? The peace of Tetschen was only concluded after four months of negotiation. Six weeks were consumed at Sistowa before the conferences on the forms were concluded; the negotiations for the peace of Vienna lasted two months, though the greater part of the Austrian states were in the hands of France. Can it be seriously proposed to reconcile the differences, and adjust the interests, of France, Austria, Russia, Prussia, Denmark, Saxony, and so many other states, watch in hand, in fifteen days? But for the fatal intervention of Austria, peace at this moment would have been concluded between Russia, France, and Prussia. Austria, the enemy of France, and covering her ambition under the mask of mediatorship, complicated every thing, and rendered reconciliation impossible. But Austria, in an open and avowed state of hostility, is in a position at once more sincere and more simple; Europe is nearer peace; there is a complication the less. If Austria is really desirous of an accommodation, let her name a place which may be made neutral and set apart for a congress, where plenipotentiaries of all the powers, great and small, may assemble, and the negotiations may proceed with the gravity and deliberation suited to the magnitude of the interests at issue, without the continuance of hostilities.” To this last proposal Metternich replied, that the proposal for a congress should forthwith be communicated by the three Allied powers to the other Allies; but before their answers could be received the struggle recommenced,<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Maret's declaration, Aug. 18, 1813, and Metternich's note, Aug. 21. Fain, ii. 217, 222. Aug. 21.

all thoughts of peace were drowned in the roar and whirl of war.

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68.

Reflections on this debate, and on the subsequent manifesto of Austria.

It may safely be affirmed that France had the better in this debate; and that, though both parties were insincere in their proposals for peace at that time, the reasons which Napoleon's diplomatists adduced for questioning the pacific intentions of the cabinet of Vienna, were more weighty than those which Metternich advanced to substantiate a similar charge against them. But, as usual with state papers of this description, they were very far from revealing the real motives which actuated either party; and were put forward with hardly any other view, on either side, than to effect that grand object of diplomacy, the concealment of the real thoughts of the parties. The true motives which actuated Austria at this momentous crisis are much more sincerely, and therefore powerfully, put forth in the Austrian manifesto, on the ground of war against France, drawn up by Gentz, which was shortly afterwards published by the cabinet of Vienna, and which will be found in the appendix to this chapter. Napoleon gave the most decisive proof that he felt he had been touched to the quick by this manifesto, by omitting in his publication of it in the *Moniteur* the most material passages which it contained.<sup>1</sup> And so reasonable were the terms of Austria's ultimatum, already given, that we have Lord Londonderry's authority for the fact, that in a private conversation between Caulaincourt and Metternich, the former admitted, that if he were Napoleon he would at once accept them, but that he had no power to do so, and that they must be referred to the Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare manifesto in *Hard.* xii. 211; and in *Moniteur*, Sept. 21, 1813.

<sup>2</sup> *Lond.* 97.

PRINCE METTERNICH, who bore so distinguished a part in this memorable negotiation, and in whose hands the question of peace or war was in a manner definitively placed, was a statesman who, for above a quarter of a century, exercised so great an influence on the history of Europe, that any history might justly be regarded as defective which did not delineate the leading features of his character and biography. He was the son of a public functionary, of ancient and noble descent, who, at an early period of the revolutionary war, bore a distin-

69.  
Early history of Prince Metternich.

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guished part in the administration of the Flemish provinces. He was born in 1773, at his father's hereditary seat near Johannisberg, on the banks of the Rhine. Educated at Strasburg, he early improved his information regarding public affairs, by travels in Germany, Holland, and Great Britain ; and soon after entered the diplomatic line, and served at the congress of Rastadt in 1799. His great abilities, however, soon attracted notice at a court which, justly impressed with the vast importance of talent in negotiation, never fails, despite its aristocratic prepossessions, to seek for it wherever it is to be found, even in the humblest ranks of the state. Accordingly, he was employed on missions of importance to St Petersburg in 1804, and Berlin in 1805. At both these capitals he sedulously studied, not only the national resources, but the temperament and habits of the people ; and as his elegant and polished manners gave him easy access to the highest circles, he soon became personally acquainted with the most influential persons at the northern cabinets. After the peace of Presburg, in 1805, he was appointed ambassador at Paris ; and in that delicate situation, though representing a vanquished monarch, he succeeded, at the early age of thirty-three, in conciliating all who came in contact with him, by the urbanity of his manners, and the admirable skill with which he maintained a difficult and yet important position.\* In 1809, he was appointed chancellor of state upon the resignation of Count Stadion, under whose auspices he had risen to eminence, and whose known hostility to France rendered it necessary for him to retire upon the peace of Schönbrunn ; and for more than thirty years from that period he exercised, almost without control, the highest authority in the Austrian dominions.<sup>1</sup>

No diplomatist, even in that age of intellectual giants, excelled, perhaps hardly any equalled Metternich, in the calm and sagacious survey which he took of existing events, in the prophetic skill with which he divined their

\* Napoleon at this time said to Metternich—"You are very young to represent so powerful a monarchy." "Your majesty," replied Metternich, "was not older at Austerlitz."—CAPEFIGUE, *Diplomat. Européens. Art. Metternich.*

<sup>1</sup> Hard. xii.  
60, 61. Biog.  
Univ. art.  
Metternich,  
Sup. lxxiv.  
12, 16.

probable tendency, and the admirable tact with which, without exciting unnecessary jealousy, he contrived to render them conducive to the interests of the country with whose direction he was intrusted. An easy and graceful address, a coolness which nothing could disturb, an inexhaustible flow of brilliant conversation, a fascinating power of delicate flattery, at once rendered him the charm of the highest society wherever he went, and veiled powers of the first order, and a sagacity in discerning the probable tendency of events which never was surpassed. He had not the moral courage which rendered Lord Castlereagh superior to the storms of fortune, nor the heroic sense of duty which made Wellington indifferent to them, nor the ardent genius which enabled Napoleon to direct their fury. His talent, and there it was unrivalled, consisted in gaining possession of the current, and directing it to his own purposes.

*Laissez venir* was his ruling principle at all periods of his life ; but this seeming *insouciance* was not the result of listlessness or indifference, but of a close observation of the course of events, a strong sense of the danger of directly opposing it, and a conscious power of ultimately obtaining its direction. He was well aware of the tide in the affairs of men which every age has so clearly evinced ; and trusted, in combating the revolutionary torrent, chiefly to its speedy tendency, like all violent passions, to wear itself out. No man was more fixed in his opinions, or more convinced of the necessity of upholding those conservative principles, both in internal government and external relations, which the French Revolution had well-nigh subverted ; but none, at the same time, saw more clearly the necessity of awaiting the proper time for action, or disguising formed determinations till the proper season for executing them had arrived. A perfect master of dissimulation, he was able to act for years in opposition to his real tenets, without letting his secret designs be perceived, or even suspected : and such was the power which he possessed of disguising his intentions, that down to the very last moment, in the congress of Prague, he succeeded in concealing them even from the penetrating eye of Napoleon.

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70.

His character  
as a states-  
man.

71.

Marvellous  
sagacity in  
observing the  
course of  
events.

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72.

His private  
honour and  
patriotic  
spirit.

Talents of this description might have been in the last degree dangerous in the hands of an ambitious and unprincipled man; but in Metternich's case they were restrained by influences of a higher description, which in a great measure secured their right direction. Though abundantly unscrupulous in diplomatic evasion in state affairs, and generally acting on the principle, that in public negotiations, as in love, oaths and protestations are the weapons which both parties may make use of at pleasure, he was yet of unsullied honour in private life; and whatever he said on the honour of a gentleman, might with confidence be relied on. Though long vested with almost unlimited power, and often placed in hostility with the aspiring spirit of Italian liberalism, he had nothing cruel or vindictive in his disposition: blood was hardly ever shed under his administration, and secondary punishment, though sometimes severe, was inflicted only so far as was deemed necessary to preserve the consistency of a despotic frame of government. Above all, his spirit was essentially patriotic; his ruses and subterfuges, and they were many, were all directed to the extrication of his country from difficulty, or the augmentation of its territory or resources; and, under his long administration, it was raised from the lowest point of depression to an unexampled height of felicity and glory. Admitting that much of this is to be ascribed to the reaction in Europe against French oppression, which was commencing when he was called to the helm of affairs, and soon produced a general effervescence which was irresistible, still much also must be attributed to the skilfulness of the pilot who weathered the storm—who yielded to it when its force was irresistible, and gained the mastery of its direction when the gales were setting in his own favour.

73.

And prin-  
ciples of  
government.

"Every thing for the people: nothing by them," which Napoleon described as the true secret of government,\* was the principle by which his conduct was uniformly regulated in domestic administration. He had the strongest aversion to those changes which are forced on

\* *Ante*, Chap. lii. § 78, note.

government by the people, but clearly saw the propriety of disarming their leaders of the most dangerous weapons which they wielded, by a paternal system of domestic administration, and a sedulous attention to their material interests. The greatest possible personal freedom, and the least possible political power, were his maxims with regard to the people. He rigorously prohibited the importation of literary works having a democratic or infidel tendency, and exercised in this respect a vexatious and perhaps unnecessary strictness over travellers; the press at Vienna was subjected to the usual censorship of absolute governments; and public thought confined within those channels which the Romish Church and Aulic Council deemed advisable. But within these limits no minister ever attended with more anxiety and success to the interests of the people. Under his direction public instruction has been rendered universal; the hereditary states have come to exhibit in their uniform wellbeing the beneficent effects of a paternal administration; the provinces of Lombardy have almost forgot, in the substantial blessings of German government, the visionary dreams of Italian independence; and the Austrian monarchy as a whole, exhibits, with a few exceptions, an example of general felicity, which may well put more popular governments to the blush for the vast capacities for exertion which they have misapplied, and the boundless means of general happiness which they have abused.<sup>1</sup>

The principles on which Metternich's policy, from the time when he was raised to the supreme direction of affairs in 1809, till the rupture of the congress of Prague in 1813, were well described by himself to Sir Charles Stewart. He found the finances of the monarchy insolvent, its military strength weakened, its public spirit crushed by misfortune. His first care was to arrange and bring about the marriage of the archduchess Marie Louise, in order to raise his country one step from the abyss into which it had fallen: never intending, however, when the national existence and power were again secured, to make any permanent change on the policy of the state. This policy, for the three years which followed the peace of Schönbrunn, was attended with the happiest effects;

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<sup>1</sup> Personal observation. Capef. viii. 341, and 'Dip. Europ. 217.

74.  
His own account of his policy at this period.

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insomuch that, when Austria was again called to appear on the theatre of Europe, she found herself speedily at the head of a force which rivalled that of the most prosperous days of the monarchy. His object throughout was to re-establish the influence and power of his country, and through it to give peace to the world; and on this principle he resolutely resisted all the entreaties with which he was beset, to join Austria to the alliance after the disasters of the Russian campaign, till the period had arrived when his preparations were complete, and matters had come to such a crisis, that she could interpose with decisive effect. But that his policy was essentially pacific, and that he had no desire to augment Austria, when restored to her suitable place in Europe, at the expense of less powerful states, is decisively proved by the fact, that ever since the peace of Vienna in 1815, and the fall of Napoleon, she has remained at rest, and no projects of ambition have either agitated her councils, or disturbed the repose of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 104,  
105. See  
also Cape-  
figue, viii.

75.  
Early history  
of Count  
Stadion.

Though the first place is justly due to Metternich, as well for the important part which he took in this momentous negotiation, as on account of the subsequent and long-continued sway which he bore in the Austrian councils, yet it is hard to say whether equal merit in bringing about the final result is not to be assigned to his less fortunate predecessor, COUNT STADION. This eminent and consistent statesman was born at Mayence on the 18th June 1763. Descended from an ancient and noble family in Upper Rhaetia, which had for generations rendered important services to the Imperial family, he was bred up at the university of Göttingen, and entered the diplomatic line under the auspices of the veteran Kaunitz, then prime minister at Vienna. The discernment of that able statesman soon perceived the abilities of the young Stadion, and, at the early age of twenty-four, he was sent by him on a diplomatic mission of some importance to Stockholm. Subsequently he was warmly patronised by Thugut, with whose firm anti-revolutionary principles his own were entirely in unison. Thugut was in 1790 associated with Count Mercy d'Argenteau in the Austrian embassy at Paris. He was by him recommended to



Kaunitz to fill an important diplomatic mission to Berlin, the object of which was to bring the Prussian cabinet into alliance with the Austrian against revolutionary France, which he ably discharged. Soon after he was sent to London, where he was deeply initiated in the policy and designs of Mr Pitt; but perceiving that the principal direction of affairs was given to Mercy d'Argenteau, and being dissatisfied with the selfish and temporising policy which at that period characterised the cabinets both of Vienna and of Berlin, he ere long withdrew from public affairs, and retired to his estates in Swabia, where he lived some years in entire privacy.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Biog. des  
Hom. Viv.  
iv. 416; Cap.  
Dip. Eur. iv.  
73, 87.

When more vigorous councils and generous feelings, however, came to animate the Austrian government, he was drawn from his retirement, and sent in 1805 to negotiate the alliance at St Petersburg, which M. de Metternich was endeavouring to effect at the same time at Berlin. After the peace of Presburg had terminated the continental war, Stadion was made minister of foreign affairs at Vienna, a post which he held till the disastrous treaty of Vienna, after the battle of Wagram in 1809. Napoleon made it a condition of peace with Austria at this disastrous epoch, that Stadion should be removed from her councils, as he had stipulated for the retirement of Thugut from the same high office at the peace of Luneville in 1796. This fact speaks volumes as to the character and consistency of both statesmen. Napoleon never stipulated for the retirement from his enemies' councils of any but the able, and those whom he could not corrupt or overawe. He surrendered, accordingly, the portfolio of foreign affairs to Prince Metternich, and, withdrawing a second time to his estates, lived in retirement till 1813. The trumpet of Germany's deliverance, however, then roused him from his retreat; and after the battle of Lützen he was sent on a secret mission to the headquarters of the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, with whom he ere long succeeded in concluding the Grand Alliance which effected the deliverance of Europe. He subsequently took an active part in the negotiations at Frankfort, Chatillon, in the treaty of Paris, and the Congress of Vienna,<sup>2</sup> and is thus to be regarded as a leading

76.  
His career as  
a minister.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. Dep.  
Eur. iv. 87,  
89. Biog. des  
Hom. Viv.  
iv. 410.

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77.  
His cha-  
racter.

man in the glorious band by which the deliverance of Europe was effected.

Stadion's character may be appreciated equally from the facts of his having been signalised for removal from office by Napoleon, and intrusted with the formation of the Grand Alliance by Metternich. Though a warm admirer of the genius and capacity of Napoleon, he was no blind worshipper of his greatness; on the contrary, it rendered him only the more impressed with the necessity of every effort being made to stem the torrent of his victories. Alone with Burke and Pitt, he measured with prophetic eye the full extent of the danger threatened to the liberties of Europe by the French Revolution; alone he saw by what means it could only be combated. He perceived that it would be vain to oppose it with the old arms of Europe: for the strife he buckled on new armour, specially prepared for the conflict in the furnace of Vulcan. It was in the Revolution that he sought the means of combating its excesses. The vast and universal armament of Austria in 1809; the appeal then made to the generous and the high-minded in every land; the raising of the landwehr and Hungarian insurrection, which brought Napoleon to the brink of ruin at Aspern, were owing to his counsels. The glorious alliance of 1813, which struck the great conqueror to the earth, was the work of his hands. He saw clearly that extraordinary circumstances required extraordinary remedies; that the days of methodical wars had gone past; that the world of religion and duty must be roused against the world of passion and selfishness. His individual probity equalled his high principles and noble aspirations. It is mainly owing to his exertions that the finances of Austria, so deplorably shattered in 1813, have since recovered their stability; and during the ten years that he has held the situation of minister of finance, there has neither been a whisper against his disinterested rectitude, nor a check to the improvement and flourishing condition of the public exchequer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cap. Dip.  
Eur. iv. 92,  
95.

Unbounded was the joy diffused through the Russian and Prussian troops by the accession of Austria to the alliance. To outstrip the slow arrival by couriers of the long wished-for intelligence, bonfires were prepared on

the summits of the Bohemian mountains; and at midnight on the 10th their resplendent light told the breathless host in Silesia that two hundred thousand gallant allies were about to join their standard. The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, with their respective troops, were assembled in anxious expectation at Trachenberg, in a large barn, awaiting the preconcerted signal, when, a little after midnight on the night of the 10th, loud shouts on the outside announced that the flames were seen; and soon the sovereigns themselves, hastening to the door, beheld the blazing lights, prophetic of the fall of Napoleon, on the summits of the mountains. Such was the joy which pervaded the deeply agitated assembly, that they all embraced, many with tears of rapture. Spontaneous salvos of artillery, and *feux-de-joie* of musketry, resounded through the whole Russian and Prussian lines. Joy beamed in every countenance; confidence had taken possession of every heart. With lightsome steps the great body of the forces in Silesia obeyed next morning the order to march into Bohemia. Innumerable columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, soon thronged the passes of the mountains; and before the six days' delay allowed for the commencement of hostilities, after the termination of the armistice, had expired, eighty thousand Russian and Prussian veterans were grouped round the walls of Prague.<sup>1</sup>

The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia arrived soon after in that city, where they were received with the utmost cordiality and magnificence by the Emperor of Austria; and a review of the principal forces of the latter on the 19th August,—when ninety-one battalions of infantry, and fifty squadrons of cavalry, in all nearly ninety thousand men, defiled before their majesties, conveyed a vivid image of the vast accession of strength which their cause had received by this fortunate alliance. It was a gratifying spectacle to the English diplomatists—Lord Aberdeen, Lord Cathcart, and Sir Charles Stewart, who had so powerfully contributed to the bringing about of this felicitous union—to behold the persevering efforts of their country, after twenty years of constancy and warfare, at length crowned by the formation of a league

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78.

Universal joy  
in the Allied  
army at the  
junction of  
Austria.

<sup>1</sup> Capef. x.  
175. Fain,  
ii. 95. Lond.  
105, 106.  
Aug. 16.

79.

Arrival of the  
Emperor of  
Russia and  
the King of  
Prussia at  
Prague.  
Aug. 19.

CHAP.  
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<sup>1</sup> Lond. 105,  
106, 109.  
Fain, ii. 95,  
96. Capec. x.  
175, 176.

which promised speedily to effect the deliverance of Europe; and their patriotic pride was not a little increased by the accounts which arrived next day of the defeat of Soult with immense loss, after a series of desperate battles in the Pyrenees, and the expulsion of his army, after a second irruption, from the whole Spanish territory.<sup>1</sup>

It had long been fondly hoped at Dresden, that the 15th August, the day of the fête of Napoleon, on which, according to the custom of Catholic countries, his birthday was held, would be the day on which the signature of the preliminaries of peace would be celebrated. As the armistice drew near to its termination, however, these hopes were gradually dispelled; and at length an imperial order, that the fête should take place on the 10th, clearly revealed the presentiment, that on the 15th the approaching resumption of hostilities would render such a display as was desired for the occasion impossible. A grand review, however, took place on the former day, with all the circumstance of military pomp, at which the King of Saxony, his brothers and nephews, and all the principal marshals and dignitaries of the empire, assisted. Napoleon, followed by this splendid cortège, passed the line, which was drawn up in the great plain of Ostra-Gehege, near Dresden, at the gallop; and afterwards the whole troops, who were collected at Dresden and its environs, defiled before him. The multitude of uniforms, costumes, and nations, which were then assembled, strongly bespoke the heart-stirring nature of the contest which had thus divided the world against itself in arms. The Old Guard, twenty thousand strong, of whom five thousand were splendid cavaliers, presented a magnificent spectacle; and it seemed as if nothing could withstand the hero who had such a force still at his disposal. A grand banquet followed, at which the whole soldiers of the Guard were entertained; and in the evening fireworks and illuminations recalled for a moment the triumphant days of the empire.<sup>2</sup>

But though the splendour of these rejoicings for a while diverted the attention and distracted the fears of the soldiers and citizens, they afforded no respite to the cares

80.  
Last review  
of Napoleon  
at Dresden,  
Aug. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii. 91.

and anxieties of their chief. Serious and thoughtful, he beheld the vast array defile before him, and immediately after the review terminated, shut himself up in his cabinet to resume the labours of diplomacy, which then wore so threatening an aspect. Melancholy forebodings filled every breast. It was universally believed that Austria had joined the alliance; no glowing order of the day, no heart-stirring proclamation, dispelled these fears, or called the troops to fresh victories; and next morning the rolling of the drums, which in every direction called the troops to their rallying points, the aides-de-camp hurrying to and fro, the clatter of artillery and waggons through the streets, and the long columns of bayonets and lances which defiled through the gates, told but too plainly that war was again about to rekindle its flames. This review deserves to be noticed; it was the LAST that Napoleon ever held of the Grand Army; disaster afterwards succeeded disaster too rapidly for the animating pageantry of military magnificence.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly before the recommencement of hostilities, Napoleon summoned an old veteran of the Revolution and the empire to Dresden, whose selfish ambition and capacity for intrigue were too dangerous to be allowed to remain in his rear, in the disgrace into which he had fallen. Fouché forthwith obeyed the summons, and on his way from Paris had an interview with Augereau at Mayence, who strongly expressed, with military energy, his conviction that the obstinacy of Napoleon would speedily prove his ruin.\* The Emperor received him with cold civility: after the first compliments were over, they entered on the state of affairs; and the veteran revolutionist had the boldness to tell him that he was fearful that five hundred thousand soldiers, supported by an insurgent population

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81.  
Melancholy  
forebodings of  
Napoleon.

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii. 91,  
92.

82.  
Interview of  
Napoleon  
with Fouché  
at Dresden.

\* "I received," said Augereau to Fouché, "letters from headquarters immediately after the battle of Bautzen, and it appears that that horrible butchery led to no result; no prisoners, no cannon. In a country extremely intersected with enclosures, we have found the enemy prepared or intrenched at every point; we suffered severely at the subsequent combat of Reichenbach. Observe that, in that short campaign, one bullet has carried off Bessières on this side of the Elbe, and another, Duroc at Reichenbach. What a war! we shall all be destroyed; what would he do at Dresden? He will not make peace; you know him better than I do. He will get himself surrounded by 500,000 men. No one can doubt that Austria will follow the example of Prussia. If he continues obstinate, and is not killed, which he will not be, we shall all be destroyed."—See *Mémoires de Fouché*, ii. 171, 172.

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in rear, would compel him to abandon Germany. Napoleon immediately resumed his warlike air. "It is distressing," said he, "that a general discouragement has seized even upon the bravest minds. The question is no longer the abandonment of this or that province; our political supremacy, and with it our very existence, is at stake. If my physical power is great, my moral power is still greater: let us beware how we break the charm. Wherefore all these alarms? Let events take their course. Austria wishes to take advantage of my embarrassments to recover great possessions; but she will never consent to my total destruction, in order to surrender herself without a shield to the jaws of Russia. This is my policy; I expect that you are to serve me with all your power.

"I have named you Governor-general of Illyria; and it is you, in all probability, who will have to put the finishing hand to the negotiations with Austria. Set off; go by Prague; begin your well-known threads of secret negotiation, and thence travel by Gratz to Laybach. Lose no time, for poor Junot, whom you are to succeed, is decidedly mad. In my hands, Illyria is an advanced guard in the heart of Austria, a sentinel to keep the cabinet of Vienna right." Fouché made a profound obeisance, and straightway set out. He was well aware that he was sent into honourable banishment; but he was too prudent to remonstrate against his destination. Before he arrived in his province, Junot had displayed evident marks of insanity; the vexations consequent on the public reproaches addressed to him by the Emperor in Russia, joined to the rigours of its climate, and domestic embarrassments, had combined to destroy his understanding; and after Fouché's arrival he was sent back to France, where, in a fortnight after, he died in the house in which he had been born, having, in a paroxysm of madness, thrown himself from a window. Napoleon's early companions in arms were fast falling around him. Bessières, Duroc, and Junot, perished within a few months of each other; the stars which shone forth in the firmament eighteen years before on the Italian plains, in the first years of the Revolution, were rapidly sinking into the shades of night.<sup>1</sup> \*

83.  
Whom he  
appoints  
governor of  
Illyria, to  
succeed  
Junot, who  
dies mad.  
July 29.

<sup>1</sup> Fouché,  
198, 215.  
Capef. x. 184,  
185.  
D'Abrantes,  
xvi. 278, 321.

\* Napoleon was deeply affected by the death of Junot. When he received

The astute chief of the police, in passing through Prague, however, immediately commenced his usual system of underhand intrigue and selfish foresight. He saw clearly that it was all over with Napoleon, and, deeming the opportunity favourable for commencing a negotiation which might give him the means of escape in the general ruin, he opened to Metternich in that city his ideas on the important part which the senate would come to play in the event of the Emperor's fall. "Europe," said he, "rising *en masse* against Napoleon, cannot fail to occasion his overthrow: we must look to the future. A regency, with the Empress at its head, and Austria as its support, seems to afford the fairest chance of success; the members of the Buonaparte family must be pensioned and sent to travel; a regency, composed of the leading men of all parties, including Talleyrand, Fouché, and M. de Montmorency, would soon arrange matters; the imperial generals might be easily appeased by great appointments, and France reduced to the limits of the Rhine." Metternich, without committing himself, received the plan proposed as a memorial, observing only "that all would depend on the chances of war." But this project on the part of the veteran regicide and revolutionist of Nantes, deserves to be recorded as the first germ of the vast conspiracy which, in the end, precipitated Napoleon from the throne.<sup>1</sup>

While Napoleon was thus providing, in the honourable exile of his old minister of police, for the security of his empire during the chances of war, another illustrious chief of the Revolution was again reappearing on the theatre, and destined shortly to close his brilliant career

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84.  
Fouché's  
secret inter-  
views with  
Metternich.

1 Fouché, ii.  
210, 212.  
Capef. x. 185,  
186.

85.  
Arrival of  
Moreau in  
Europe.

the intelligence he exclaimed, "Voilà encore un de mes braves de moins! Junot! O mon Dieu!" Shortly before his death Junot wrote a letter to the Emperor, which, amidst much excitement arising from commencing insanity, contained expressions strongly descriptive of the feelings entertained by his early companions in arms at that period. "I, who loved you with the adoration of the savage for the sun—I, who live only in you—even I implore you to terminate this eternal war. Let us have peace. I would wish to repose my worn-out head, my pain-racked limbs, in my house, in the midst of my family, of my children, of my friends. I desire to enjoy that which I have purchased with what is more precious than all the treasures of the Indies—with my blood—the blood of an honourable man, of a good Frenchman. I ask tranquillity, purchased by twenty-two years of active service, and seventeen wounds, by which the blood has flowed, first for my country, then for your glory."—D'ABRANTES, xvi. 323.

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in the ranks of his enemies. MOREAU, ever since his trial and condemnation by the First Consul\* in 1804, had lived in retirement in America, beholding the contest which still raged in Europe, as the shipwrecked mariner does the waves of the ocean from which he has just escaped. But the Emperor of Russia, who entertained the highest opinion of the republican general, deeming it not unlikely that he might be induced to lend the aid of his great military talents, to support the cause of European freedom, had some time previously opened a correspondence with him at New York. Its result was an understanding between them. It was agreed, as the basis of his co-operation, "that France should be maintained in the limits which she had acquired under the republic; that she should be allowed to choose her own government by the intervention of the senate and political bodies; and that, as soon as the imperial tyranny was overturned, the interests of the country should become paramount to those of the imperial family. In pursuance of these principles, it was agreed that Moreau and Bernadotte should appear together on the banks of the Rhine, make an appeal to the exhausted army with the tricolor flag, and strive to overturn the tyranny which the 18th Brumaire had established. No sooner were these preliminaries agreed on, than Moreau embarked at New York, on board the American ship Hannibal, and after a passage of thirty days, arrived at Gotenburg on the 27th July, whence he immediately set out for Stralsund to have an interview with Bernadotte.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Capef. x.  
169, 170.  
Lab. Chute  
de Napoleon,  
i. 294.

86.  
His reception  
at Stralsund  
by Berna-  
dotte.

Moreau's arrival on the shores of the Baltic was felt, as Marshal Essen, the Swedish commander expressed it, "as a reinforcement of a hundred thousand men." He was received at Stralsund with the highest military honours by Bernadotte, who, amidst the thunders of artillery and the cheers of an immense concourse of spectators, conducted him to his headquarters. But though the meeting between the hero of Hohenlinden and the old republican of the Sambre and Meuse was extremely cordial, yet they experienced considerable embarrassment

\* *Ante*, Chap. xxxviii. § 37



when they came to consult on the ulterior measures to be pursued in France, in the event of Napoleon being dethroned. Moreau, whose republican ideas had undergone no change by his residence in America, was clear for reverting to the constitution of 1792; and perhaps indulged the secret hope, that in such an event he might be called to an elevated place in the councils of the country. Bernadotte, whose democratic principles had been singularly modified by the experience he had had of the sweets of royalty, inclined to a monarchical constitution; and nursed the expectation that the choice of the French people, as well as of the Allied sovereigns, might fall on himself. But though the seeds of future and most serious discord might thus be perceived germinating in the very outset of their deliberations, yet common hatred of Napoleon kept them united in all objects of present policy; and after concerting, for three days, with perfect unanimity the plan of military operations, Moreau set out for the Allied headquarters in Bohemia.<sup>1</sup>

Moreau's journey from Stralsund to Prague was a continued triumph. Such was the greatness of his reputation, and the enthusiasm excited in the north of Germany by his joining the Allied cause, that his progress resembled rather that of a beloved sovereign, than of a foreign, and at one period hostile, general. The innkeepers refused to accept any thing from him for their entertainment; the postmasters hastened to offer him their best horses, and sent on couriers to announce his approach; wherever he stopped, a crowd collected, eager to catch a glance of so renowned a warrior. At Berlin, not only the street in which the hotel was situated where he lodged was thronged with multitudes, but those even which opened into it; and during the few hours that he remained there, he was visited by the principal persons in that city. Nor was his reception at the Allied headquarters, where he arrived late at night on the 16th August, less flattering. Early next morning he was visited by the Emperor Alexander, who lavished upon him every possible attention; and he was immediately admitted into the entire confidence of the Allied sovereigns. "General Moreau," said Alexander, "I know your opinions: I will do nothing which can

CHAP.  
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<sup>1</sup> Lab. i. 294,  
295. Capet.  
x. 170, 171.

87.  
His journey  
to, and recep-  
tion at  
Prague.

Aug. 16.

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1813.

Aug. 15.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
68, 369.  
Lab. i. 296.  
297 Capef.,  
x. 172, 173.

88.  
Contention  
about the  
appointment  
of a com-  
mander-in-  
chief to the  
Allies.

thwart them. France shall be allowed to pronounce itself—to show its power; I leave it perfectly free.” His reception by the Emperor Francis was not less flattering, who publicly thanked the conqueror of Hohenlinden for the moderation he had displayed, and the discipline he had preserved, when in possession of a considerable part of his dominions. Moreau immediately began to study the maps for the campaign which was about to open; and it was very much by his advice that the grand attack on Dresden, which so soon ensued, and so nearly proved fatal to Napoleon, was adopted. On the 15th August, General Jomini, whose military writings have rendered him so celebrated, and who at that period occupied the situation of chief of the staff to Marshal Ney, chagrined at being refused the rank of general of division in the French army, to which his services entitled him, passed over to the Allies and was most cordially received. Lecourbe was hourly expected; so that circumstances seemed to afford no small countenance to the favourite idea of Moreau, that it was possible to form a legion of thirty thousand men out of the French prisoners in Russia, who were reported to be ready to combat Napoleon; and that this force would form the nucleus of a host which, under his command, would divide with the Emperor the military forces of the French empire.<sup>1</sup>

But how gratifying soever the arrival of such distinguished French officers at the Allied headquarters might be, they led to a division on a point of vital importance, which, if not terminated by the magnanimous self-denial of the party principally concerned, might, at the very outset, have proved fatal to the whole alliance. That one generalissimo was indispensable to give unity to the operations of so many different armies, when combating such a commander as Napoleon, was sufficiently evident; but who that generalissimo was to be, was by no means equally apparent. This point was canvassed with the utmost anxiety at the Allied headquarters for some days before hostilities were resumed, and no small heat was evinced on both sides in the discussion. The Emperor Alexander openly and eagerly aspired to the supreme command, in which he was supported by the King of

Prussia. His colossal power and great reputation, the unexampled sacrifices which he had made in combating the French Emperor, as well as the unparalleled successes with which his efforts had been crowned—his personal courage and tried energy of character—all conspired to give weight to his claim, which was strongly recommended both by Moreau and Jomini. It seemed difficult, indeed, to conceive on what grounds it could be resisted; the more especially as the Archduke Charles, the only general in the Allied armies whose experience or exploits could render him a fit competitor for the situation, was kept at a distance by the unhappy dissensions which for some years had prevailed in the Imperial family of Austria.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP.  
LXXIX.  
1813.

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 101,  
102. Jom.  
iv. 375.

The command, in truth, would have been unanimously conferred upon the Emperor by the Allied powers, had it not been for the arrival of Moreau, and the high place immediately assigned him in the Russian military councils. The Austrians, not unnaturally, felt apprehensive of being placed in some degree under the command of a French general, from whose hostility they had suffered so much; and it was soon painfully evident that, on this account, no cordial co-operation on their part could be hoped for, if the Emperor Alexander were invested with the supreme command. In these circumstances, that generous and noble prince, though not without a severe pang, relinquished his claim to that elevated situation; and, from deference to Austria, it was conferred on Prince Schwartzberg, who remained generalissimo down to the capture of Paris. But though another was placed at the nominal head of affairs, it was impossible to deprive the Emperor Alexander of the weight which he possessed as the head of the largest and most experienced portion of the Allied forces. Indeed, such was the jealousy of the Russian soldiers at the idea of foreign interference, that Schwartzberg's orders were for a considerable time privately sent to Barclay de Tolly, and by him transmitted, in his own name, to the corps of his army. It was often difficult to say, amidst the confusion of emperors, kings, and generals, at headquarters, who really held the supreme command. Every one was willing to

89.  
Reasons  
which led to  
its being con-  
ferred on  
Schwartz-  
berg.

CHAP.  
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1813.

<sup>1</sup> Lab. i. 297.  
 Lond. 101,  
 102. Capet.  
 x. 190. 191.  
 Jom. iv. 375,  
 376.

90.  
 Disinterested  
 conduct of  
 the Allied  
 generals in  
 regard to the  
 command.

share in the credit of successful measures, but none would admit the responsibility of reverses ; \* and nothing but the common danger to which they were exposed, and the fervent spirit by which they were animated, prevented the alliance from falling to pieces, from the want of a real head, in the very outset of its operations.<sup>1</sup>

Nor was it only by the Emperor Alexander that disinterested generosity was displayed. On the trying occasion of arranging the commands and distributing the corps of the multifarious host which was assembled round the Allied standards, princes, generals, diplomatists, officers and soldiers, vied with each other in the alacrity with which they laid aside, not only national enmities, but individual rivalry, and bent all their energies, without a thought of self, on forwarding the great objects of the confederacy. Alexander, discarding all thought of the supreme command, divided his force in nearly equal proportions between the three grand armies, and subjected them to the command of Schwartzemberg, who had invaded his dominions ; of Blucher, who had hitherto been unfortunate in war ; and of Bernadotte, who had taken so active a share in the first Polish campaign. Tauenzein and Bulow obeyed without a murmur the commands of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, whose sword had cut so deep into the vitals of Prussia after Jena, and at Lübeck ; Langeron and Sacken cheerfully acted under the command of the veteran Prussian Blucher, as yet unknown to successful fame : Russia, the main stay and soul of the alliance, whose triumphant arms had changed the face of Europe, had not the command of one of the great armies ; while Austria, the last to enter into the confederacy, and so recently in alliance with Napoleon, was intrusted with the general direction of the whole. On contrasting this remarkable unanimity and disinterestedness, with the woful dissensions which had paralysed the efforts, and marred the fortunes of all former coalitions, or the grasping ambition and ceaseless jealousies which at that very time brought disaster upon Napoleon's lieutenants in Spain, we perceive that it is

\* " *Prospera omnes sibi vindicant : adversa uni solo imputantur.*" —  
 TACITUS.

sometimes well for nations, as well as for individuals, to be in affliction; that selfishness and corruption spring from the temptations of prosperity, as generosity and patriotism are nursed amidst the storms of adversity; and that the mixed condition of good and evil is part of the system which the mercy of Providence has provided in this world against the consequences of the blended principles of virtue and wickedness which have descended to us from our first parents.

It is a singular, and to an Englishman a highly gratifying circumstance to observe, in how remarkable and marked a manner the achievements of Wellington and his gallant army in Spain operated at all the most critical periods of the struggle, in animating the exertions, or terminating the irresolution of the other powers which co-operated in the contest. When Russia, in silence, was taking measures to withstand the dreadful irruption which she foresaw awaited her from the power of France, and hesitated whether even her resources were adequate to the encounter, she beheld, in the defence of the lines of Torres Vedras, at once an example and a proof of the efficacy of a wise defensive system. When the negotiations between her and France were approaching a crisis, in May 1812, she was encouraged by the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz to persevere in resistance; on the eve of the battle of Borodino, she made her lines resound with the thunder of artillery for the joyous intelligence of the victory of Salamanca; during the circular march to Taroutino, she received support amidst the flames of Moscow from the fall of Madrid. Nor did the glorious events of the Peninsula in 1813, occur less opportunely to exercise a decisive influence on the fortunes of Europe. The intelligence of the overthrow of Vitoria arrived just in time to determine the vacillation, and add the strength of Austria to the alliance; that of the defeat of Soult in the Pyrenees, to embolden the counsels and invigorate the arms of the Allied army on the resumption of hostilities, after the armistice of Pleswitz.

Whether these remarkable coincidences were the result of accidental occurrence, or formed part of the fixed design of Providence for the deliverance at the appointed

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1813.

91.  
Great influence of Wellington's success on the Allied cause at various periods.

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LXXIX.

1813.

92.  
Remarkable  
coincidences  
of events in  
the latter  
stages of the  
war.

season of an oppressed world, it is not given to mortal eye to discover. But this much may with confidence be asserted, that they afford a memorable example of the all-important truth, applicable alike to nations and individuals, that the only sure foundation for final success is to be found in the fearless discharge of duty: that human eye cannot scan, nor human foresight discover, the mysterious threads by which an overruling power works out ultimate reward for strenuous, or ultimate retribution for ignoble conduct: and that, whatever may be the horrors of the wilderness through which they pass, ultimate salvation is decreed for that people, who, following the pillar of fire by night, and the pillar of cloud by day, resolutely persevere through every difficulty in the appointed path of virtue.

## CHAPTER LXXX.

## CAMPAIGN OF DRESDEN.

THE French Revolution was a revolt not so much against the government and institutions, as against the morality and faith of former times. It professed to offer new motives of action, new rewards of courage, new inducements to exertion, to emancipated man. The old restraints of precept, duty, religion, were to be abolished. The rule of action was to be, not what is right, but what is agreeable; not what duty enjoins but what passion desires; not what is promised—ultimate reward in another world—but what is attended in this with immediate gratification. Sedulously fanning the passions, it invariably neglected the conscience; often using the language of virtue, it as uniformly directed the actions of vice. The incalculable power of the generous affections—the elevating influence of noble sentiments, was neither overlooked nor underrated by its leaders; on the contrary, they entered largely into their policy for the government of the world. They were considered as the appropriate, and often the most efficacious means of rousing mankind; as instruments never to be despised, but on the contrary carefully used for effecting the purposes of democratic elevation or selfish ambition. But it never for an instant entered into their contemplation, that these sentiments were to occasion any restraint upon their conduct; that the limitations which they so loudly proclaimed ought to be imposed on the power of others, should be affixed to their own; or that they should ever be called to forego present objects of ambition or gratification from an abstract sense of what is right, or a submissive obedience to the Divine

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1813.

I.  
Spirit of the  
French  
Revolution.

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commands. Hence its long-continued and astonishing success. While it readily attracted the active and enterprising by the brilliant prizes which it offered, and the agreeable relaxation from restraint which it held forth, it enlisted at the same time the unwary and unforeseeing even in the opposite ranks, by the generous sentiments which it breathed, and the perpetual appeals to noble feelings which it made. And thus with almost superhuman address it combined in its ranks the energy of the passions and the sacrifices of the affections, the selfishness of matured and far-seeing sin, and the generosity of deluded and inexperienced virtue.

2.  
Cause of the  
vast strength  
of the Revolu-  
tionary  
passions.

The vehement passions which the prospect of unrestrained indulgence, whether of pleasure, gain, or power, never fails to excite, the ardent desires which it awakens, the universal energy which it calls forth, are for a time irresistible. If experience and suffering were not at hand to correct these excesses, and restore the moral equilibrium of nature, it is hard to say how the career of iniquity could be stopped, save by a special interposition of avenging power, or the mutual destruction of the wicked by each other. All the passions of the Revolution, in its different stages, were the passions of sin; the strength it displayed was no other than the energy which, anterior even to human creation, had been arrayed against the rule of Omnipotence. The insatiable thirst for power which characterised its earlier stages; the unbounded desire for sensual gratification which succeeded its disappointment; the lust of rapine which sent its armies forth to regenerate, by plundering, all mankind; the passion for glory, which sacrificed the peace and blood of nations to the splendour or the power of one ruling people—were so many directions which, according to the circumstances of different periods, the same ruling principle, the *thirst for illicit gratification*, successively took. The sober efforts of industry, the simple path of duty, the heroic self-denial of virtue, were insupportable to men thus violently excited. Nothing short of the spoils of the world could gratify passions excited by the prospect of all its indulgences. When Satan strove to tempt our Saviour, and reserved for the trial his strongest allurements, he led him up to an exceeding high mountain,



and showed him all the kingdoms of the earth, and offered to give him them all if he would fall down and worship him. Memorable words! indicating at once the continued agency of the great adversary of mankind on individual conduct, and the pre-eminent strength of the temptations to achieve his conquests which were to be drawn from the social or national passions.

"Experience," says Dr Johnson; "is the great test of truth, and is perpetually contradicting the theories of men." It is by the ultimate consequences of their actions that the eternal distinction between virtue and vice is made apparent, and the reality of Divine superintendence brought home to the universal conviction of men. There is a limit to human wickedness; and duty, supported by religion, generally in the end proves victorious over passion resting on infidelity. More than two thousand years ago, the royal bard thus sang in words of inspired felicity, "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors."<sup>1</sup>

Of whom were these words spoken? Of those in the days of David or of Napoleon? Twenty years of almost unbroken prosperity had reared up and consolidated the mighty fabric of the French empire, and no power on earth seemed capable of overthrowing it. Despite the catastrophe of the Moscow campaign, the genius of the Emperor had again brought victory to the tricolor standards. The triumphs of Lützen and Bautzen had steadied the wavering fidelity of his allies, and reanimated the spirit of his people; and four hundred thousand brave men were arrayed around his eagles on the Elbe, to assert and maintain the dominion of the world. Never, save on the Niemen, had Napoleon seen himself at the

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3.  
Moral reaction which stops this unbridled career.

<sup>1</sup> Psalm  
lxxiii. 12-19.

4.  
Extraordinary exemplification of it in the history of Napoleon.

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head of such a force; never had Europe beheld such a host assembled over its whole breadth, for the subjugation of its independence. Within two months from the resumption of hostilities, the colossal structure was overthrown; the French armies were swept as by a whirlwind from the German plains; Spain was rejoicing in her freedom: the liberated nations of Europe were returning thanks for their deliverance: and in six months more the empire of Napoleon was at an end; the mighty conqueror was cast away in mimic sovereignty on a petty island, and the glories of the Revolution were numbered among the things that have been!

5.  
Causes of this  
extraordinary  
change.

The way in which this extraordinary retribution was brought about now appears traced in colours of imperishable light. It was the same false and vicious principle, pushed to its necessary consequences, which produced the internal calamities and external disasters of the Revolution. By promising and affording unbounded gratification to the passions and desires, without any regard to the mode in which it was to be obtained, that great convulsion arrayed an astonishing force of energy and talent on its side; and if these indulgences could have been obtained without involving the ruin or destruction of others, it is hard to say where the career of selfish ambition would have stopped. But honest industry, laborious exertion, virtuous self-denial, alone can purchase innocuous enjoyments; all summary and short-hand modes of obtaining them without such efforts, necessarily involve the injury of others. Robbery and plunder, accordingly, veiled under the successive and specious names of liberty, patriotism, and glory, constituted from first to last its invariable method of action. It began with the spoliation of the church and the emigrant noblesse; the fundholders and capitalists were the next objects of attack; the blood of the people was then drained off in merciless streams; and when all domestic sources were exhausted, and the armies raised by these infernal methods, let loose to pillage and oppress all the adjoining states, had failed in extorting the requisite supplies, even the commons of the poor and the hospitals of the sick were at last confiscated under the imperial government.

With those who were enriched by these iniquitous

methods, indeed, this system was in the highest degree popular ; but in all cases of robbery, there are two parties to be considered—the robber and the robbed. The long continuance and wide extent of this iniquity at length produced a universal spirit of exasperation ; resistance was commenced by instinct, and persisted in from despair. From the ice of Kamschatka to the Pillars of Hercules ; from the North Cape to the shores of Calabria—all nations were now convulsed in the effort to shake off the tyranny of France. A crusade greater than had been collected either by the despotism of Asia in ancient, or the fervour of Europe in more modern times, was raised for the deliverance of mankind ; and sixteen hundred thousand men on the two sides appeared in arms in Germany, Spain, and Italy, to decide the desperate conflict between the antagonist principles of Vice striving for liberation from all restraints, human and divine, and Religion enjoining the authority of duty and obedience to the commands of God. The world had never beheld such a contest : if we would seek a parallel to it, we must go back to those awful images of the strife of the heavenly powers darkly shadowed forth in Scripture, to which the genius of Milton has given poetic and terrestrial immortality.

The armistice was denounced on the 11th, but, by its conditions, six days more were to elapse before hostilities could be resumed. It was an object, however, for the Allies to be in perfect readiness for action the moment that the prescribed period arrived ; and accordingly, on the 12th, the Russian and Prussian troops, in pursuance of the concerted plan of operations, began to defile in great strength by their left into Bohemia. The junction with the Austrian troops in the plains of Jung-Buntzlau, raised the Allied force in that province to two hundred and twenty thousand men. But though this host was in the highest degree formidable, both from its numbers, and the admirable quality of the troops of which the greater part of it was composed, yet a considerable part of the Austrians were new levies, as yet unused to war ; and the variety of nations of which it was composed, as well as the want of any previous habit of

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6.

Reaction  
against the  
Revolution  
from the  
misery it  
occasioned.

7.

First opera-  
tions of the  
Allies.

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co-operation among each other, or uncontrolled direction in its head, rendered the success of any important operations undertaken in the outset of the campaign very doubtful. Hostilities were commenced by the Allies on the side of Silesia before the six days had expired. Taking advantage of some trifling infractions of the armistice by the French troops, the Allied generals on the 14th sent a corps to take possession of Breslau, which lay in the neutral territory between the two armies, and was likely immediately to fall into the enemy's hands on the resumption of hostilities. On the day following, Blücher advanced in great force across the neutral territory, and every where drove in the French videttes: and their troops, surprised in their cantonments, hastened to fall back behind the Bober.<sup>1</sup>

August 14.

August 15.  
1 Bout. 5, 6.  
Jom. iv. 369,  
370. Fain,  
ii. 237, 238.

8.  
Napoleon  
enters  
Bohemia.  
Aug. 17.

No sooner was the Emperor informed of the resumption of hostilities on the Silesian frontier, than he set out from Dresden, and the first night slept at Görlitz. As he was stepping into his carriage, two persons from different quarters arrived; Narbonne from Prague, with the account of the final rupture of the negotiations, and Murat from Naples, with the offer of his redoubtable sword. Napoleon had a conference of an hour in duration with the former, whom he despatched with the proposal for the continuance of negotiations during hostilities, which, as already mentioned, proved ineffectual;\* and then set out, with the King of Naples, in his carriage. Though well aware of the vacillation which Murat had evinced in command of the army in Poland, and of the advances which he had made towards negotiation with the Allied powers, the Emperor had the magnanimity to forgive it all: and he was again invested with the command of the cavalry, in which service he was, in truth, unrivalled. Uncertain on which side the principal attacks of the Allies were likely to be directed, and having himself no fixed plan of operations, Napoleon established his Guard and reserve cavalry at Görlitz and Zittau, watching the operations of his adversaries, and prepared to strike whenever they made a false movement,

\* *Ante*, Chap. lxxix. § 61.

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or afforded him an opportunity of falling upon them with advantage. Fifty thousand men, in three columns, crossed the mountain frontier of Bohemia, and established themselves in the Austrian territories at Gabel, Rumburg, and Reichenberg; while the feeble Austrian detachments, which were stationed at that point under Count Neipperg, fell back, still skilfully screening their rear, on the road to Prague.<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon's movements at this time were based upon the idea, to which he obstinately adhered till it had well-nigh proved his ruin, that the great effort of the Allies would be made on the side of Silesia, and that it was there that the first decisive strokes of the campaign were to be delivered. He persevered in this belief, even after he had become acquainted, by his irruption into Bohemia, with the march of the grand Russian and Prussian army into that province, and their concentration under the immediate eye of the Allied sovereigns round the walls of Prague. All the efforts of Marshal St Cyr to convince him that this was the quarter from which danger was to be apprehended; that so great an accumulation of force in Bohemia would not have been made without some serious design; and that the French would soon find their quarters straitened in the neighbourhood of Torgau and Dresden, were in vain.\* Deaf to these arguments, and uninfluenced even by the obvious confirmation which they received from the march of the Russians and Prussians in such force into Bohemia, Napoleon persisted in believing that it was on the Bober and the Katzbach, now comparatively stripped of troops, that he should commence operations; and assuring St Cyr, who was left at Pirna with thirty thousand men,<sup>2</sup> in command of the

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii. 239, 240.  
Odel. i. 239, 241.

9.  
He turns aside into Silesia, notwithstanding all St Cyr's efforts.

Aug. 20.  
<sup>2</sup> Odel. i. 241, 242. St Cyr to Napoleon, 20 th Aug. 1813. Napoleon to St Cyr, Aug. 20, 1813. St Cyr, iv. 367, 372.

\* "The movement which your Majesty has commenced into Bohemia, upon Gabel, and which you appear to design to push still further on, appears to me one of those happy inspirations of which your genius is so fruitful. The reunion of the three sovereigns at Prague, of the Austrian army, and a considerable part of the Russian and Prussian, do not leave a doubt of the intentions of the enemy. They have always desired to operate on that side; they desire it still, notwithstanding the movements of your Majesty. So great an army is not assembled without a purpose: their object is to execute a change of front along their whole line, the left in front moving upon Wittenberg; and to straiten Dresden and Torgau so much by intrenching themselves around them, even if they should not succeed in taking these fortresses, as to render all egress almost impossible, while, with their right, they make head against your Majesty on the Elbe."—ST CYR TO NAPOLEON, August 21, 1813; ST CYR, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 372; *Pièces Just.*

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passes leading from Bohemia to Dresden, that he had nothing to fear; that Vandamme would come to his assistance if the enemy threatened him in considerable force; and that, if necessary, he himself would return with his guard, and assemble a hundred and sixty thousand men round the walls of that city; he ordered the whole troops under his immediate command to wheel to the left, and defile towards Silesia.\*

10.  
Retreat of  
Macdonald in  
Silesia.

Aug. 17.

Aug. 18.

Aug. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Bout. viii.  
10. Fain, ii.  
243, 244.  
Jom. iv. 370.

Meanwhile Blucher was vigorously pressing on the French army in Silesia, which, not being in sufficient strength to resist his formidable masses, was every where falling back before him. Lauriston was pushed by the Russians under Langeron; Ney, by the corps of Sacken; Marmont and Macdonald, by the Prussians under Blucher and York. Such was the vigour of the pursuit, that ground was rapidly lost by the French in every direction. Ney fell back on the night of the 17th from Liegnitz to Hanau; next day the Katzbach was passed at all points; on the 18th, Blucher established his headquarters at Goldberg, while Sacken occupied Liegnitz. Still the Allies pressed on: Langeron on the left passed the Bober at Zobten, after routing a detachment which occupied that point; in the centre, Blucher, with his brave Prussians, obliged Lauriston also to recross it; while Ney, in like manner, was compelled to evacuate Buntzlau, and fall back across the same stream. Thus, at all points, the French force in Silesia was giving way before the enemy;<sup>1</sup> and it was of sinister augury that the gallant generals at its head did not feel themselves strong enough to with-

\* "Should the Russian and Austrian forces united march upon Dresden by the left bank, General Vandamme will come to its relief; you will then have under your orders 60,000 men in the camp of Dresden on the two banks. The troops in the camp of Zittau, become disposable in that event, will also hasten there; they will arrive in four days, and raise your force to 100,000. I will come with my Guard, 50,000 strong; and in four days we shall have from 160,000 to 180,000 men round its walls. It is of no consequence though they cut me off from France: the essential point is, that I should not be cut off from Dresden and the Elbe. The army of Silesia, which is from 130,000 to 140,000 men, without the Guard, may be reinforced by that corps d'élite, and raised to 180,000. They will debouch against Wittgenstein, Blücher, and Sacken, who, at this moment, are marching against our troops at Buntzlau: as soon as I have destroyed or disabled them, I will be in a situation to restore the equilibrium by marching upon Berlin, or taking the Austrians in rear in Bohemia. All that is not as yet clear: but one thing is sufficiently clear; that you cannot turn 400,000 men, posted under cover of a chain of fortified places, and who can debouch at pleasure by Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, or Magdeburg. All you have to do is, to dispute the ground, gain time, and preserve Dresden, and to maintain active and constant communications with General Vandamme."—NAPOLÉON to ST CYR, 17th August 1813; ST CYR, iv. 365; *Pièces Just.*

stand his advance: for it was an army which Napoleon estimated at a hundred thousand men, which was thus receding without striking a blow. \*

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But the arrival of the heads of the columns of Guards and cavalry, commanded by Napoleon in person, which were directed with all possible expedition to the left, through the Bohemian mountains towards Buntzlau, soon changed the state of affairs in this quarter. No sooner did they appear, than the retreat of Ney's army was stopped, and the soldiers with joy received orders to wheel about and march against the enemy. The indefatigable activity of the Emperor communicated itself to the troops: all vied with each other in pressing forward to what it was hoped would prove a decisive victory; and infantry, cavalry, and artillery, with the Imperial Guard at their head, poured in an impetuous, yet regulated torrent, down the valleys of the Bohemian mountains, and inundated the Silesian plains. Such was Napoleon's anxiety to press forward, that he outstripped even the cavalry of the Guard, and arrived at Lauban, in advance of Görlitz, with hardly any of his attendants around him. By daybreak on the following morning he was on the banks of the Bober, and entered Lowenberg with the advanced guards. The bridge, which the Prussians had broken down, was restored under the cover of artillery; Lauriston, in face of the enemy, recrossed the river, and advanced, with a constant running fire in front, to the gates of Goldberg. Blucher continuing his retreat on the following day, the Katzbach also was passed, and the whole army of Silesia concentrated around Jauer. But the retreat of the Allies, though decidedly pronounced, was far from being a flight. With admirable skill they took advantage of every favourable position to check the pursuit, and give time to the columns in rear to retire in order; and in several severe actions, especially one in front of Goldberg, inflicted a very severe loss upon the enemy. Such was the magnitude of the forces employed on both sides, and the ex-

11.  
Napoleon's  
advance  
against  
Blucher, who  
falls back.

Aug. 20.

Aug. 21.

Aug. 21.

"MY COUSIN,--Inform the Duke of Tarentum, (Macdonald,) that I have put under his orders the army of the Bober, which is composed of one hundred thousand men, infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers included."--NAPOLEON'S *Instructions to BERTHIER for MACDONALD*, 23d August 1813: ST CYR, iv. 374; *Pièces Just.*

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1 Odel. i.  
241, 244.  
Bout. 10, 11.  
Fain, ii. 244,  
245. Lab. i.  
301, 302.

12.  
Advance of  
the Allies  
upon  
Dresden.

tent of ground over which hostilities were carried on, that although they had only lasted five days, and no general engagement had taken place, each party were already weakened by fully six thousand men. Napoleon evinced the greatest satisfaction at the result of this day's operations, and at thus seeing so great a mass of the enemy's forces retreating before him in the very outset of the campaign. But cooler observers in the French army remarked, that the plan of the Allies was sagaciously designed, and skilfully executed, when they had thus early succeeded in attracting Napoleon to whichever side they chose, and yet avoided the risk of an encounter when the chances were no longer in their favour.<sup>1</sup>

In truth, Blucher's advance and subsequent retreat were part of the general policy of the Allies for the conduct of the campaign laid down at Trachenberg, and developed with remarkable precision in his instructions; \* and Napoleon, in consequence of it, and from the bold measures adopted in his rear, was brought to within a hair's-breadth of destruction. Following out the decided but yet judicious counsels of Bernadotte, Moreau, and Jomini, the Allied sovereigns had taken the resolution of descending, with their whole disposable force, from Bohemia upon Saxony and Dresden, and thus striking at the enemy's communications, and the heart of his power,

\* "Should the enemy evince an intention to make an irruption into Bohemia, or to attack the army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, the army of Silesia will endeavour to impede his operations as much as possible, always taking care not to engage superior forces. In order to arrive at that object, it will be necessary to harass the enemy with the advanced guard and light troops, and observe him narrowly, in order to prevent him from stealing a march, unperceived, into Saxony; but still every engagement with the enemy in superior force must be avoided. Should the enemy, on the other hand, direct his principal forces against the army of Silesia, it will endeavour to arrest him as long as possible; and, having done so, direct its retreat upon the Neisse, taking especial care not to compromise its safety. In that event, the corps of General Sacken will extend itself along the Oder, and take measures, by means of a corps of light cavalry, to keep up the communication with the army of reserve in Poland. The light corps at Landshut will also, in that event, keep up the communication with the army of Bohemia; the fortresses of Silesia must be adequately garrisoned, chiefly from the landwehr, and the main army will retire upon Neisse. That place, with its intrenched camp, which must be put in a proper posture of defence, will serve as a *point-d'appui* to it; while the army of Bohemia, and that of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, will take the enemy in rear. Should the enemy, on the other hand, direct his principal attack against the army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, or on Berlin, the army of Silesia will resume the offensive; and the bulk of the Allied forces will be directed against his rear, the army of Silesia on the right bank of the Elbe, that of Bohemia on the left bank."  
—Instructions to FIELD-MARSHAL BLUCHER; St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 349.



at the very time when the Emperor himself, with the flower of his army, was far advanced in Silesia in pursuit of the retiring columns of Blucher. At the time when Napoleon was driving the last corps of the army of Silesia across the Bober, the grand army of the Allies, two hundred thousand strong, broke up from their cantonments in Bohemia, and began to cross the Erzgebirge mountains. All the passes into Saxony were soon crowded with the innumerable host.<sup>1</sup>

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Aug. 21.

1 St Cyr, iv.  
78, 79. Bout.  
24, 25. Fain,  
ii. 252.

To oppose this formidable invasion there was no force immediately available but that of St Cyr, stationed at Pirna, which numbered only twenty-two thousand men present with the eagles on the frontier, though its nominal amount was thirty thousand. Vandamme's corps, of greater strength, and Poniatowski's Poles, were within a few days' march, at the entrance of the passes towards Zittau and Gabel, leading into Silesia; but they could not be relied on to co-operate in warding off any sudden attack on the capital. Meanwhile, the danger was instant and pressing. The Allied army rapidly advanced; and, on the 21st, Barclay de Tolly and Wittgenstein presented themselves in great strength before the barriers, on the heights of Peterswalde, which they speedily forced, and laid open the great road from Prague to Dresden. The Prussians, under Kleist, farther to the left, descended from the mountains upon Gottsche and Dohna; while the great masses of the Austrians, with the Imperial headquarters, moved by the roads of Altenburg and Saida on Dippoldiswalde; and on the extreme left, Colloredo, Chastellar, Giulay, and Klenau, poured down from the Marienberg hills, and directing their advance upon Freiburg, threatened entirely to intercept the communication between Dresden and the Rhine.<sup>2</sup>

13.

Forces of St  
Cyr and Van-  
damme to  
oppose this  
invasion.

Aug. 22.

2 St Cyr, iv.  
78, 80. Fain,  
ii. 252, 253.  
Bout. 24, 25.  
Lab. i. 307.

St Cyr had from the beginning conjectured, from the perfect stillness of the Allied army along the whole Bohemian frontier, contrasted with the incessant rattle of tirailleurs which Blucher kept up in front of his line, that the real attack was intended to be made outside of Dresden. But having been unable to get the Emperor to share in his opinion, he was left alone to make head against the torrent. Too experienced, however, to attempt to withstand so vast a force with the comparatively few

14.

The Allies  
approach  
Dresden.

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Aug. 23.

<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
85, 86. Bout.  
26, 27.  
Fain, ii. 252,  
253. Jom.  
iv. 380.

15.  
Important  
advantage  
gained by  
this move-  
ment.

troops at his disposal, he contented himself with impeding their advance as much as possible ; and, after some sharp encounters with Wittgenstein's advanced guard, withdrew within the redoubts of Dresden, while Wittgenstein occupied the town of Pirna, and the Allied headquarters were advanced to Dippoldiswalde. Schwartzberg's original intention was not to have moved on Dresden, but to have directed the main body of his force on Freiburg, with a view to a combined operation with Bernadotte in the neighbourhood of Leipsic ; and it was only after arriving at Marienberg on the 23d, that this plan was abandoned. Without doubt, the movement upon Dresden promised infinitely greater and more immediate results than an advance into the plains of Saxony ; but it was owing to the time lost in this march and countermarch, that the failure of the operation was owing. For if their whole force had from the first marched direct upon Dresden, they would have arrived before its walls on the evening of the 23d, and it might have been carried by assault on the day following, thirty hours before the nearest of Napoleon's troops could have come up to its relief.<sup>1</sup>

As it was, the Allies had now accomplished the greatest feat in strategy. They had thrown themselves in almost irresistible strength upon the enemy's communications, without compromising their own. Nothing was wanting but vigour in following up the measure, adequate to the ability with which it had been conceived ; and Dresden would have been taken, a corps of the French army destroyed, and the defensive position on the Elbe, the base of Napoleon's whole positions in Germany, broken through and rendered useless. But to attain these great objects, the utmost vigour and celerity in attack were indispensable ; for Napoleon was at no great distance on the right bank of the Elbe, and it might with certainty be anticipated, that as soon as he was made aware of the danger with which the centre of his power was threatened, he would make the utmost possible exertions to come up to its relief. The Allies arrived, however, in time to gain their object if they had followed up their movement with sufficient activity. Notwithstanding the unnecessary detour towards Freiburg, part of their army reached the neighbourhood of Dresden on the evening of the

23d,\* and next morning the trembling inhabitants of that beautiful city beheld the smiling hills around their walls resplendent with bayonets, and studded with a portentous array of artillery. During the whole of the 24th, the troops, who were extremely fatigued, continued to arrive; and on the morning of the 25th, a hundred and twenty thousand men, with above five hundred pieces of cannon, were assembled round the city.† Moreau and Jomini warmly counselled an immediate attack, and Lord Cathcart, who with his usual gallantry had rode forward over the green turf behind the Grosse Garten, between Plauen and Raecknitz, to the close vicinity of the enemy's posts, reported that the coast was clear, and strongly supported the same advice. Alexander was clear for adopting it; but Schwartzenberg and the Austrians, accustomed only to the methodical habits of former wars, and insensible to the inestimable importance of time in combating Napoleon, insisted upon deferring the attack, till Klenau's corps, which, being on the extreme left, had not yet arrived from Freiburg, should be in line. This opinion prevailed, as the most lukewarm and timid invariably does with all *small* assemblies of men on whom a serious responsibility is thrown;‡ the attack was deferred till the following afternoon, and meanwhile Napoleon arrived with his cuirassiers and Guards, bearing the issue of the strife upon their sabre points.<sup>1</sup> §

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 27,  
Jom. iv. 382,  
383. St  
Cyr, iv. 96,  
99. Lond.  
iii.

On approaching Dresden, Schwartzenberg issued the

\* “Dresden, 23d August 1813, Ten at night.—At five this afternoon the enemy approached Dresden, after having driven in our cavalry. We expected an attack this evening, but probably it will take place to-morrow. Your majesty knows better than I do, what time it requires for heavy artillery to beat down enclosure walls and palisades.”—ST CYR to NAPOLEON, 23d August 1813; ST CYR, iv. 380.

† “An immense army, composed of Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, is at this moment all around Dresden, with a prodigious train of artillery. From the vast amount of force which he thus collected, it would appear that the enemy is determined to hazard an attack, knowing that your majesty is not far off, though perhaps not suspecting that you are so near as you actually are. We are determined to do all in our power: but I can answer for nothing more with such young soldiers.”—ST CYR to NAPOLEON, 25th August 1813, *Midnight*; ST CYR, iv. 384, 385.

‡ Observe, *small* assemblies of men, such as juries or councils of war. Rash counsels are often adopted in large assemblies, for the plain reason, that individual responsibility is lost amid numbers. Individuals trusted with supreme powers are so frequently bold, because the dread of responsibility is merged in a sense of duty or a desire of distinction which no one else can share.

§ The preceding account of what passed before Dresden on the 25th, is entirely confirmed by the minute details on the subject I have often received from my highly esteemed and venerable friend, the late Lord Cathcart himself.

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16.  
Schwartz-  
berg's procla-  
mation to his  
troops.

following order of the day to his troops :—"The great day is arrived, brave warriors ! Our country reckons on you : heretofore she has never been disappointed. All our efforts to obtain peace on equitable terms, such terms as alone can be durable—have failed. Nothing could bring back the French government to moderation and reason. We enter not alone into the strife : all that Europe can oppose to the powerful enemy of peace and liberty, is on our side. Austria, Russia, Prussia, Sweden, England, Spain, all combine their efforts to attain the same object—a solid and durable peace ;—a reasonable distribution of force between the different powers, and the independence of each individual state. It is not against France, but the overwhelming domination of France beyond its own limits, that this great alliance has been formed. Spain and Russia have proved what the constancy and resolution of a people can do. The year 1813 will demonstrate what can be effected by the united force of so many powerful states. In a war so sacred, we require more than ever to practise those virtues by which our armies in time past have been so distinguished. Devotion without bounds to our monarch and our country : magnanimity alike in success or reverse : determination and constancy on the field of battle : moderation and humanity towards the weak—such are the virtues of which you should ever give the example. The Emperor will remain with you ; for he has trusted to your arms all that he holds most dear—the honour of the nation, the protection of our country, the security and welfare of posterity. Be grateful, warriors, that you march before God, who will never abandon the cause of justice ; and under the eyes of a monarch whose paternal sentiments and affection are well known to you. Europe awaits her deliverance at your hands, after so long a train of misfortunes."<sup>1</sup>

1 Cap. ix.  
196, 198.17.  
Napoleon  
returns to-  
wards Dres-  
den.

The Emperor having received intelligence of the movements of the Allies across the Bohemian frontier, had halted at Lowenberg on the 23d ; and after giving the command of the army destined to combat Blucher to Marshal Macdonald, retraced his steps the same day, accompanied by the reserve cavalry and guards, to Görlitz. The same evening Murat was sent on to Dresden to inform

the King of Saxony and St Cyr of the speedy arrival of the Emperor with the flower of his army; and such was the confidence which prevailed at headquarters, that Berthier said in a careless way, "Well, we shall gain a great battle: we shall march on Prague, on Berlin, on Vienna!" The soldiers, however, who marched on their feet, and did not ride like Berthier in an easy carriage, though animated with the same spirit, were by no means equally confident. They were ready to sink under their excessive fatigue, having marched since the renewal of hostilities nearly ten leagues a day; and such was their worn out condition, that the Emperor ordered twenty thousand bottles of wine to be purchased at Görlitz, and distributed among the Guards alone. So complete, however, was the exhaustion of the country, from having so long been the seat of war, that hardly a tenth part of that quantity could be procured, and the greater part of the wearied men pursued their march without any other than the scanty supplies which they could themselves extract by terror from the inhabitants. Napoleon continued his advance in the middle of his Guards all the 24th, and halted at Bautzen. He there resolved to continue his march direct upon Dresden, or move to the left upon Pirna, and threaten the communications and rear of the Allies, according to the information he might receive as to whether or not that capital, unaided, could hold out till the 28th.<sup>1</sup>

Early on the following morning, the Emperor resumed his march, still keeping the road which led alike to Dresden and Pirna, with the design of throwing himself, if possible, on the rear of the Allies. Having, however, the day before, despatched General Gourgaud to Dresden\* to obtain information as to the state of the city, he halted, according to agreement, at Stolpen, where the road to Dresden branches off from that to Bohemia, and there

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
256, 257.  
Bout. 30.  
Odel. i. 248,  
249. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
374, 386.

18.  
Reasons of  
Napoleon's  
return to  
Dresden.

\* "To-morrow," said Napoleon to General Gourgaud, "I will be on the road to Pirna; but I will stop at Stolpen. Set you out immediately for Dresden; ride as hard as you can, and be there this evening; see St Cyr, the King of Naples, and the King of Saxony; reassure every one. Tell them to-morrow I can be in Dresden with 40,000 men, and the day following arrive there with my whole army. At daybreak visit the redoubts and outposts; consult the commander of engineers as to whether they can hold out. Return to me as quickly as possible to-morrow at Stolpen, and report well the opinion of Murat and St Cyr, as to the real state of things."—FAIN, ii. 256.

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received the most alarming intelligence as to the state of affairs in the Saxon capital. The letters both of Murat and St Cyr left no room for doubt that the city was in the most imminent danger ; that the accidental delay in the attack had alone hitherto preserved it ; and that its fall might hourly be looked for. At eleven at night Gourgaud returned, and confirmed the intelligence ; adding, that it was surrounded by so vast an army, that not a chance remained of holding out another day but from the immediate return of the Emperor. Already the lines of investiture extended from Pirna to Plauen ; and nothing but the arrival of Klenau, the approach of whose columns was already announced, was wanting, to enable the enemy to complete the circle from the Upper to the Lower Elbe. Preparations were already made for evacuating the Grosse Garten : the glare of a village in flames immediately behind it, threw an ominous light on the domes of Dresden ; and when Gourgaud left the city shortly after dark, the whole heavens to the south and west were resplendent with the fires of the enemy's bivouacs.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
257, 258. St  
Cyr, iv. 98,  
99. Grosse  
Chron. i.  
374, 380.

19.  
Instructions  
to Van-  
damme.

Napoleon now saw that affairs were urgent : there was not a moment to be lost if Dresden was to be saved, and the communications of the army preserved. He instantly sent for General Haxo, the celebrated engineer, and thus addressed him :—"Vandamme is beyond the Elbe, near Pirna : he will find himself on the rear of the enemy, whose anxiety to get possession of Dresden is evidently extreme. My design was to have followed up that movement with my whole army : it would, perhaps, have been the most effectual way to have brought matters to an issue with the enemy ; but the fate of Dresden disquiets me. I cannot bring myself to sacrifice that town. Some hours must elapse before I can reach it ; but I have decided, not without regret, to change my plan, and to march to its relief. Vandamme is in sufficient strength to play an important part in that general movement, and inflict an essential injury on the enemy. Let him advance from Pirna to Gieshübel, and gain the heights of Peterswalde ; let him maintain himself there, occupy all the defiles, and from that impregnable post await the issue of events around Dresden. To him is

destined the lot of receiving the sword of the vanquished ; but he will require *sang-froid* : above all, do not let him be imposed upon by a rabble of fugitives. Explain fully my intentions to Vandamme ; tell him what I expect from him. Never will he have a finer opportunity of earning his marshal's baton." Haxo immediately set out, descended from the heights of Stolpen into the gorges of Lilienstein, joined Vandamme, and never again quitted his side.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
259, 260.

By daybreak on the following morning, the whole troops around the Emperor's headquarters were in motion, and defiling on the road to Dresden. Despite their excessive fatigue, having marched forty leagues in four days, they pressed ardently forward ; for now the cannon were distinctly heard from the left bank of the Elbe, and the breathless couriers who succeeded each other from the Saxon capital announced, that if they did not speedily arrive the city was lost. The Guards were at the head of the array ; next came Latour Maubourg's cuirassiers, then Victor's infantry and Kellerman's cavalry ; while Marmont's corps moved in a parallel line on the direct road from Bautzen, which they had never left. At eight o'clock, the advanced guard reached the elevated plateau where the roads of Bautzen, of Stolpen, and of Pillnitz, intersect each other, shortly before the entry of the new town of Dresden, and from which the eye can survey the whole plain on the other side of the Elbe. With what anxiety did they behold it entirely filled by an innumerable host of enemies ; and the hostile columns so near the advanced works that an assault might every instant be expected ! Already the Prussian uniforms were to be seen in full possession of the Grosse Garten : columns of attack were forming within cannon-shot of the suburb of Pirna ; while, on the banks of the Elbe, Wittgenstein had constructed batteries to enfilade the road by which the troops were to enter the capital. Dresden was surrounded on all sides ; the suburb of Friedrichstadt alone was not enveloped. The French were visible in force in the redoubts and behind the works ; but their numbers appeared a handful in the midst of the interminable lines of the beleaguering host ;<sup>2</sup> and a silence more terrible

20.

Entrance of  
the French  
Guards into  
Dresden.<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii.  
261, 263.  
St Cyr, iv.  
99, 100.  
Odel. i. 250.  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
381, 390.

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than the roar of artillery, bespoke the awful moments of suspense which preceded the commencement of the fight.

21.

Arrival of the  
Emperor in  
Dresden.  
Aug. 26.

No sooner, however, did the French advanced Guard appear, than the contest commenced. So violent was the fire kept up by Wittgenstein's guns on the road by which the Emperor was to pass, that he was obliged to leave his carriage, and creep along the ground on his hands and knees over the exposed part; while the bullets from the Russian batteries on the one side, and the bombs from the redoubt Marcellini on the other, flew over his head. Having in this way got over the dangerous ground, he suddenly made his appearance at ten o'clock at the Marcellini palace, to the no small astonishment of its royal inmates, who were deliberating on the necessity of coming to terms with the enemy. After a short stay with the King, whom he reassured by the promise of the speedy arrival of his Guards, Napoleon went out to visit the exterior works from the suburb of Pirna to that of Freiberg, accompanied only by a single page to avoid attracting attention; and so close were the enemy's posts now in that quarter, that the youth was wounded by a spent musket-ball, while standing at the Emperor's side.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lab. ii. 309,  
Fain, ii. 264.  
Odel. i. 249,  
251.

22.

Arrival of the  
Guards and  
cuirassiers.

Having completed this important reconnoissance, on which his operations for the day in a great measure depended, Napoleon returned to the palace, and sent out couriers in all directions to convey his orders to the corps which successively arrived for the defence of the capital. Meanwhile the Guards and cuirassiers, in great strength, followed the Emperor like a torrent across the bridges into the city; and it was soon apparent, from their numbers and gallant bearing, that all immediate danger was at an end. In vain the inhabitants offered them refreshments; these brave men, impressed to the lowest drummer with the urgency of the moment, continued to press on, though burning with thirst, and ready to drop down under the ardent rays of the sun. From ten in the morning till late at night, ceaseless columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, pressed without a moment's intermission over both the bridges;<sup>2</sup> and while the enemy's columns darkened the brows of the heights of

<sup>2</sup> Odel. i. 249,  
252, and ii.  
164. Fain, ii.  
264, 265.  
Lab. ii. 309,  
310. Grosse  
Chron. i. 391,  
394.



Raecknitz, the gallant cuirassiers, in defiling over the bridges, keeping their eyes fixed on the spot, held their heads the higher, and passed on undaunted.

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At length, at four o'clock in the afternoon, Schwartzberg's patience, which had long held out for the arrival of Klenau's corps, which had not yet come up, became exhausted, and he gave the signal for the attack. Instantly the batteries on all the heights round the city were brought forward, and above a hundred guns in the front line commenced a terrible fire on its works and buildings. The bombs and cannon-balls fell on all sides, and over its whole extent. Several houses speedily took fire; the inhabitants, in despair, took refuge in the cellars and vaults to avoid the effects of the bombardment; while the frequent bursting of shells in the streets, the loud thunder of the artillery from the ramparts and redoubts, the heavy rolling of the guns and ammunition waggons along the pavement, the cries of the drivers, and measured tread of the marching men who forced their way through the throng, combined to produce a scene of unexampled sublimity and terror. Every street and square in Dresden was by this time crowded with troops; above sixty thousand men had defiled over the bridges since ten o'clock, and the balls fell and bombs exploded with dreadful effect among their dense masses.<sup>1</sup>

23.  
Formidable  
attack on  
Dresden.

Aug. 26.

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 112.  
Odel. i. 251.  
Tém. Ocul.  
ii. 166. Fain,  
ii. 268. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
399, 400.

The attack of the Allies was indeed terrible. At the signal of three guns, fired from the headquarters on the heights of Raecknitz, six dark columns, deep and massy, descended from the heights, each preceded by fifty pieces of artillery, and advanced, with a steady step and in the finest order, against the city. It was an awful, but yet an animating sight, when these immense masses, without firing a shot or breaking the regularity of their array, descended in silent majesty towards the walls. No force on earth seemed capable of resisting them; so vast, yet orderly was the array, that their tread, when hardly within cannon-shot, could be distinctly heard from the ramparts. Wittgenstein commanded the three columns on the right, who advanced from the Grosse Garten; Kleist's Prussians in the centre moved partly through the great garden, partly over the open ground to their left, under Prince Augustus of Prussia, and with them were

24.  
Awful aspect  
of the Allied  
columns as  
they attacked  
Dresden.

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<sup>1</sup> Lond. 112,  
113. Odel. i.  
252. Tém.  
Ocul. ii. 166,  
167. Fain, ii.  
268, 269.  
Vaud. i. 152.  
Kausler, 645.  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
400, 404.

combined three divisions of Austrians under Count Colloredo; the remainder of the Austrians on the left, under Prince Maurice of Lichtenstein, formed the completion of the vast array. Soon the beautiful buildings of Dresden were enveloped in smoke and flame; an incessant fire issued from the works; while the Allied batteries on the semicircle of heights around sent a storm of projectiles through the air, and the moving batteries in front of their columns steadily advanced towards the embrasures of the redoubts.<sup>1</sup>

25.  
Early success  
of the Allies.

At some points the attack was irresistible. The great redoubt situated in front of the Mocsinski Garten was stormed in the most gallant style, after its palisades had been beaten down by the Austrians under Colloredo. Sir Robert Wilson, ever foremost where danger was to be encountered or glory won, was the first man who entered it. At the same time, an impetuous attack by the Russians under Wittgenstein, carried the redoubts on the left, near the Hopfgarten; while Kleist, with his ardent Prussians, drove the enemy entirely out of the Grosse Garten, and approached on that side close to the barriers of the suburb. The French, by bringing up fresh troops, regained the Mocsinski redoubt; but the fire of the Austrian batteries, which now enfiladed it on both sides, was so terrible, that the men who entered were almost all destroyed, and the work again fell into the enemy's hands. By six o'clock in the evening, the last reserves of St Cyr's corps had been all engaged; the suburbs were furiously attacked, as well on the side of Pirna as that of Plauen. Napoleon, seriously disquieted, had stationed all the disposable battalions of the Old Guard at the threatened barriers, and was despatching courier after courier to hasten the march of the Young Guard. Meanwhile the Austrian guns were furiously battering the rampart, at the distance only of a hundred paces; a tempest of bombs and cannon-balls was falling on all sides; the trembling inhabitants were wounded as soon as they appeared at their doors; frequent explosions of shells and ammunition-waggons in the streets, diffused universal consternation:<sup>2</sup> already the hatchets of the pioneers were heard at the gate of Plauen and barrier of Dippoldis-

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii.  
270, 271.  
Odel. i. 253,  
254. Tém.  
Ocul. Ibid. ii.  
169, 170.  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
406, 407.

walde, and the triumphant cry was heard among the assailants, "To Paris! to Paris!"

Napoleon, who had evinced great anxiety while this tremendous attack was going forward, was at length relieved at half-past six by the arrival of the Young Guard, and now deemed himself in sufficient strength to hazard a sally at each extremity of his position. The gate of Plauen was thrown open, and the dense masses of the Guard under Ney rushed furiously out; while a quick discharge of musketry from the loopholed walls and windows of the adjacent houses, favoured their sortie. The Austrian columns, little anticipating so formidable an onset, fell back in disorder: and the French Guards, taking advantage of the moment when the gate was free, defiled rapidly out, and, forming in line on either side of it, by their increasing mass and enthusiastic valour gained ground on the enemy. Similar sorties took place at the gate of Pirna and at the barrier of Dippoldiswalde. At all points the assailants, wholly unprepared for such an attack, and deeming the day already won, lost ground: the Young Guard, with loud cheers, regained the blood-stained redoubt of Mocsinski; the left, under Mortier, drove the Russians from the suburb of Pirna, and dislodged the Prussians from the Grosse Garten; while Murat, issuing with his formidable squadrons from the gate of Plauen, established himself for the night in the rear of the right wing under Ney, which had emerged altogether from the suburbs on the road to Freiberg into the open country. Astonished at this unexpected resistance, which they had by no means anticipated, and perceiving, from the strength of the columns which had issued from the city, as well as the vigour of the attacks, that Napoleon in person directed the defence, the Allied generals drew off their troops for the night; but, not yet despairing of final success, they resolved to await a pitched battle on the adjacent heights, on the following morning.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv. 104, 106.  
Lab. ii. 313, 314. Lond. 113, 114.  
Fain, ii. 270, 271. Bout. 29.  
Grosse Chron. i. 410, 415.

The weather, which for some days previous had been serene and intensely hot, now suddenly changed; vast clouds filled the skies, and soon the surcharged moisture poured itself out in a torrent of rain. Regardless of the storm, Napoleon traversed the city after it was dark, and

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waited on the bridge till Marmont and Victor's corps began to defile over. As soon as he was assured of their arrival, he returned hastily through the streets again, issued forth on the other side, and, by the light of the bivouacs, visited the whole line occupied by his troops, now entirely outside the city, from the barrier of Pirna to the suburb of Friedrichstadt. The force he had accumulated was such as to put him in a condition, not only to repel any further attack which might be directed against the city, but to resume the offensive at all points. In addition to the corps of St Cyr, Marmont, and Victor, he had at his command the whole Guards, and all the heavy horse of Milhaud and Latour Maubourg, under Murat; at least a hundred and twenty thousand men, of whom twenty thousand were admirable cavalry. His position at Dresden also gave him very great advantages; for by securing his centre by means of a fortress, of which the strength had been tried on the preceding day, it enabled him to throw the weight of his forces on the two flanks. On the other hand the Allies, having no such protection for the middle of their line, were under the necessity of strengthening it equally at all points, and thus in all probability would be inferior to the enemy at the real points of attack. Considerable reinforcements, however, came up during the night from the side of Freiburg; and although Klenau had not yet made his appearance, yet his arrival was positively announced for the following day. Notwithstanding the loss of six thousand men in the assault of Dresden, they had now nearly a hundred and sixty thousand men in line, independent of Klenau, who it was hoped would come up before the action was over. They resolved, therefore, to await the attack of the enemy on the following day; and, withdrawing altogether from cannon-shot of the ramparts, arranged their formidable masses in the form of a semicircle on the heights around the walls, from the Elbe above the suburb of Pirna, to the foot of the slopes of Wolfnitz, below the city.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 114,  
115. Bout.  
29, 31. Odel.  
ii. 255, 256.  
Jom. iv. 390,  
391.

Napoleon disposed his troops during the night as follows:—The right wing, composed of the corps of Victor, and the cavalry of Latour Maubourg, was stationed in front of the gate of Wildsdrack, and in the fields and

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28.

Napoleon's  
dispositions  
on the 27th.

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 31,  
32. Lond.  
114, 115.  
Vaud. 154.  
Jom. iv. 390.  
St Cyr, iv.  
110, 111.

29.

Positions of  
the Allied  
troops.

low grounds from that down the Elbe towards Priesnitz; the centre under the Emperor in person, comprised the corps of Marmont and St Cyr, having the infantry and cavalry of the Old Guard in reserve, supported by the three great redoubts; on the left, Ney had the command, and directed the four divisions of the Young Guard and the cavalry of Kellerman, which extended to the Elbe, beyond the suburb of Pirna. Above a hundred and thirty thousand men\* were by daylight on the following morning assembled in this position, having Dresden, bristling with cannon, as a vast fortress to support their centre. But their position was extraordinary, and, if they were defeated, altogether desperate; for they fought with their backs to the Elbe and their faces to the Rhine: the Allied army, in great strength, had intercepted their whole communications with France, and if worsted, they were thrown back into a town with only two bridges traversing an otherwise impassable river in their rear.<sup>1</sup>

On the other side, the Allies arranged their troops in the following manner:—On the right, Wittgenstein commanded the Russians on the road to Pirna, and Kleist the Prussians between Striesen and Strehlen: in the centre, Schwartzenberg with the corps of Colloredo, Chastellar, and Bianchi's grenadiers in reserve, occupied the semicircle of heights which extend from Strehlen by Raecknitz to Plauen; while beyond Plauen, on the left, were posted the corps of Giulay and one division of Klenau's troops, which had at length come up. But from the extreme Allied left, at the foot of the heights of Wolfnitz to Priesnitz, was a vacant space wholly unoccupied, destined for the remainder of Klenau's men when they should arrive; and the whole of that wing was not only intrusted to inexperienced troops, but was destitute of any solid support, either from inequality of ground or

* St. Cyr's corps, three divisions,	20,000
Marmont's do. three divisions,	22,000
Victor's do. four divisions,	28,000
Latour Maubourg's cavalry, four divisions,	14,000
Kellerman's do. three divisions	9,000
Infantry of the Old Guard,	6,000
Do. of the Young Guard, four divisions,	28,000
Cavalry of the Guard, four divisions,	4,000

131,000

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<sup>1</sup> Vaud. i.  
154, 155.  
Bout. 32, 33.  
Jom. iv. 390.  
391. St Cyr,  
iv. 111, 112.

from villages. This oversight on the part of the general-in-chief was the more reprehensible, as they stood opposite to the terrible cuirassiers of Latour Maubourg, fourteen thousand strong, with nothing but an intervening level space for the horse to charge over; while, if they had been drawn back half a mile, to the passes and broken ground in their rear, or not pushed across the precipitous defile of Tharandt, which separated them from the main army, they would have been beyond the reach of danger.<sup>1</sup>

30.  
Battle of the  
27th August.

Both armies passed a cheerless night, drenched to the skin by the torrents of rain which never ceased to descend with uncommon violence. Napoleon, however, who had supped with the King of Saxony the night before in the highest spirits, was on horseback at six in the morning, and rode out to the neighbourhood of the great redoubt, which had been the scene of such a desperate contest on the preceding day. Ghastly traces of the combat were to be seen on all sides; out of the newly-made graves hands and arms were projecting, which stuck up stark and stiff from the earth in the most frightful manner. The Emperor took his station beside a great fire which had been lighted by his troops in the middle of the squares of the Old Guard, and immediately behind were the cavalry of the cuirassiers dismounted beside their horses. The cannonade soon began along the whole line; but it was kept up for some hours only in a desultory manner, the excessive rain and thick mist rendering it impossible either to move the infantry, or point the guns with precision. Jomini strongly urged the Allied sovereigns during the interval to change the front of their line; and, accumulating their force on the enemy's left, which was next the Elbe, to cut off Vandamme and Poniatowski, who were at Pirna and Zittau, from the remainder of the army. This manœuvre, which would have re-established affairs, was altogether foreign to Schwartzenberg's ideas, which were entirely based upon cutting off the French communications by their right with Torgau and Leipsic. Meanwhile the French right gradually gained ground upon the detached corps of Austrians beyond the ravine on the Allied left, which was equally incapable of maintaining itself by its intrinsic strength,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Bout. 33.  
St Cyr, iv.  
110, 111.  
Jom. iv. 390,  
391. Lond.  
115. Grosse  
Chron. i. 406  
410.

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or obtaining succour across the chasm from the centre ; and Klenau, though strenuously urged to accelerate his movements, had not yet come up.

Napoleon was not long of turning to the best account this state of matters in the Allied line. Occupying himself a strong central position, and in a situation to strike at any portion of the vast semicircular line which lay before him, he had also this immense advantage, that the thick mist and incessant rain rendered it impossible, not only for the Allied generals to see against what quarter preparations were directed, but even for the commanders of corps to perceive the enemy until they were close upon them. This last circumstance led to a most serious catastrophe on the left. Unperceived by the enemy, Murat had stolen round in the rear of Victor's men, entirely turning the flank of the Austrians, and got with Latour Maubourg's formidable cuirassiers into the low meadows which lie between Wolfnitz and the Elbe, in the direction of Priesnitz, where it was intended that Klenau's corps should have completed the Allied line to the river. Shrouded by the mist, he had thus placed himself with his whole force close to the extreme Austrian left, and almost perpendicular to their line, before they were aware of his approach. Murat, in order to divert the enemy's attention from this decisive attack, caused Victor's infantry to occupy Löbda in their front, from whence they advanced in column against the line, and kept up a heavy cannonade from a strong battery posted on an eminence on their left. When the action had become warm between the foot, he suddenly burst, with twelve thousand chosen horsemen, out of the mist, on their flank and rear. So heavy had been the rain that scarce any of the Austrian muskets would go off. The effect of this onset, as of the Polish lancers, under similar circumstances, on the English infantry at Albuera, was decisive. The Austrians, before they had time to throw themselves into square, were broken by the formidable heavy armed French lancers, a force novel in modern war, but which, like the charge of the steel-clad knights of old, proved irresistible.<sup>1</sup>\* In a few minutes the line was broken

31.  
Total defeat  
of the Aus-  
trian left.

<sup>1</sup> Marmont's  
Voyages, i.  
259. Kauster,  
651. Bout.  
32, 33. Lab.  
ii. 309, 310.  
St Cyr, iv.  
111, 112.  
Jom. iv. 391,  
392.

\* Marshal Marmont, who commanded the attack, ascribes the successful issue of this cavalry charge, one of the most important made during the whole

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through, pierced in all directions, and cut to pieces. A few battalions next the centre made their way across the ravine, and escaped; the whole remainder, being three-fourths of the entire corps, with General Metsko, were killed or made prisoners.

32.  
Operations  
on the French  
left.

No sooner was Napoleon made aware, by the advancing cannonade on his right, that Murat's attack had proved successful, than he gave orders for his left to advance against Wittgenstein, while the action in the centre was still confined to a distant cannonade. Ney had concentrated the four divisions of the Young Guard between the Grosse Garten and the Elbe, and with them and Kellerman's dragoons he immediately made a vigorous attack upon the enemy. He was received by the Russians with their wonted steadiness. The villages of Seidnitz and Gross Dobritz were gallantly defended, against an overwhelming superiority of force, by General de Roth; and when he could no longer make them good, he retreated, in good order, to the main body of Wittgenstein's men, placed in the rear behind Reick. Jomini, seeing Ney far advanced along the Elbe, and showing his flank to the Allied centre, counselled the Emperor Alexander to move forward Kleist, Milaradowitch, Collaredo, and the masses of the centre which had not yet been engaged, and assail his columns in flank, by Strehlen—a movement which promised the most important results, and would probably have balanced the success of Murat on the left. Alexander at once appreciated the importance of this movement, and Kleist and Milaradowitch were already in motion to execute it; but to support them, and fill up the chasm in the line occasioned by their descending the hills to the right, it was necessary that Barclay de Tolly, with the Russian reserve, should advance to the front.<sup>1</sup> Barclay, however, did not move: the signal made for that purpose was at first not seen

<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
394, 395.  
Bout. 33.  
Kausler, 650,  
351. St Cyr,  
iv. 3. Lond.  
121. Grosse  
Chron. i. 416  
421.

war, to its being made by cuirassiers armed with lances; the cuirass giving confidence to the mind, while the lance tripled the power of the arm. "On ne vint à bout de cette infanterie, qu'en faisant prendre les cuirassiers, par cinquante lanciers de l'escorte du General Latour Maubourg, qui firent brèche, et donnerent à ceux-là le moyen de pénétrer et de tout détruire. Ces lanciers purent approcher impunément, attendu que les coups de fusil, au cause de la pluie, étaient rares; mais la question n'eût pas été incertaine dans tous les cas, si les cuirassiers eussent été eux-mêmes armés de la lance redoutable."—MAR-MONT, *Voyages*, i. 259.



in consequence of the mist, and subsequently disregarded ; and before the order could be renewed by an officer, a dreadful catastrophe had occurred, which in a great measure determined the Allies to retreat.

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Moreau, who had with equal energy and ability discharged the important duties committed to him in the council of the Allies ever since the campaign reopened, was in earnest conversation with the Emperor Alexander about this very advance of Barclay's, when a cannon-shot from the French batteries in the centre almost carried off both his legs, the ball passing through the body of his horse. This melancholy event excited a very deep sensation at the Allied headquarters, and for a time diverted Alexander's attention at the most critical moment of the action. The interest which it awakened was enhanced by the extraordinary heroism which the wounded general evinced under an excess of pain which might well have shaken any man's fortitude. He never uttered a groan while carried to the rear, with his mangled limbs hanging by the skin ; and when laid on the table of the cottage into which he was carried to suffer amputation, he called for a cigar, which he smoked with the utmost tranquillity. He bore the painful operation with the same firmness which had distinguished his whole demeanour since his wound : and when the surgeon who had cut off the right leg examined the other, and pronounced, with a faltering voice, that it was impossible to save it—"Cut it off then, also," said he calmly, which was immediately done. When the retreat commenced, he was transported in a litter to Laun, where he wrote a letter to his wife singularly characteristic of his mind.\* Alexander was indefatigable in his attentions to the illustrious patient, and sanguine hopes were at one period entertained of his recovery : but at the end of five days fever supervened, and he expired with the same stoicism as he had lived, but without giving the slightest trace of religious impression. His body was embalmed and con-

33.  
Wound and  
death of  
Moreau.

Sept. 1.

\* "MY DEAREST—At the battle of Dresden, three days ago, I had both my legs carried off by a cannon-ball. That rascal Bonaparte is always fortunate. They have performed the amputation as well as possible. Though the army has made a retrograde movement, it is by no means a reverse, but of design to draw nearer to General Blucher. Excuse my scrawl: I love and embrace you with my whole heart."—CAPEFIGUE, x. 201.

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<sup>1</sup> Lond. 115,  
121. Caepf.  
x. 201, 202.  
Biog. Univ.  
xxx. 95, 96.

34.  
Singular  
manner in  
which he  
came by his  
death.

veyed to Prague, whence it was transported to St Petersburg, and buried in the Catholic church of that capital with the same honours as had been paid to the remains of Kutusoff. Alexander wrote a touching letter to his widow,\* and presented her with a gift of five hundred thousand roubles, (£20,000,) and a pension of thirty thousand, (£1200;) but the remains of Moreau remained far from his native land, and amidst the enemies of the people whom he had conducted with so much glory.<sup>1†</sup>

The manner in which this great general met his death-wound, was very remarkable. The cannon of the guard, which were posted in front of the position which Napoleon occupied, had been observed for some time to exhibit an unusual degree of languor in replying to the discharges of the enemy: and the Emperor sent Gourgaud forward to inquire into the cause of so unusual a circumstance. The answer returned was, that it was to no purpose to waste their fire, as they could not reply with effect to the enemy's batteries, placed on the heights above, from so low a situation. "No matter," said the Emperor, "we must draw the attention of the enemy to that side; renew firing." Immediately they began their discharge, and directed their shot to a group of horsemen which at that moment appeared on the brow of the hill on the heights above. An extraordinary movement in the circle soon showed that some person of distinction had fallen; and Napoleon, who was strongly inclined to superstition, at first supposed it was Schwartzenberg, and observed on the sinister augury which the conflagration in his palace

\* "When the frightful catastrophe which befell at my side General Moreau, deprived me of the guidance and experience of that great man, I indulged the hope that by means of care he might yet be preserved for his family and my friendship. Providence has disposed it otherwise; he has died as he lived, in the full possession of a great and constant mind. There is but one alleviation to the evils of life: the assurance that they are sympathised with by others. In Russia, Madame, you will every where find these sentiments; and if it should suit your arrangements to fix yourself there, I will strive to do every thing in my power to embellish the existence of a person of whom I consider it a sacred duty to be the support and consolation. I pray you, Madame, to count on this irrevocably, and not to permit me to remain in ignorance of any circumstance in which I can be of any service to you, and always to write to me directly. The friendship which I had vowed to your husband extends beyond the tomb; and I have no other means of discharging what is but in part the debt which I owe him, but by attending to the comfort of his family. Receive, Madame, in these sad and mournful circumstances, the assurances of my unalterable friendship—ALEXANDER."—*See CAPEFIGUE*, x. 205, note.

† The spot where Moreau was struck, is marked by a simple monument shaded with trees; and constitutes one of the many interesting objects with which the charming environs of Dresden abound.

on the night of the fête on Marie Louise's marriage had afforded.\* It was then, however, that Moreau was struck; and so anxious had the Emperor been to conceal the intelligence of that great commander's arrival from his troops, though well aware of it himself, that it was not till next day that it became known; when the advanced guards, in pursuing the Allies towards Bohemia, coming upon a little spaniel which was piteously moaning, were attracted by the collar round its neck, on which were written the words—"I belong to General Moreau." Thus they became at once acquainted with his presence and his fate.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
291, 292.  
Capef. x. 202,  
203.

A council of war was now held at the Allied headquarters as to the course which should be pursued; the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia, and principal generals, assembled on horseback in a ploughed field, to deliberate on a step on which the destinies of Europe might depend. The King of Prussia was clear for continuing the action, and to this opinion the Emperor of Russia and his principal generals inclined; observing that the whole centre and reserves had not yet engaged; that the French would hardly venture to attack the middle of their position, when defended by so powerful an artillery; and that a decisive blow might yet be struck at the French left. But Schwartzemberg was decidedly for a retreat. Independent of the disaster on his left, which he felt the more sensibly as it had fallen almost exclusively on the Austrian troops, he was not without anxiety for his right, on account of the progress of Vandamme in his rear in that direction, who had advanced to Königstein, and already made himself master of the defile of Pirna. He strongly represented that the reserve parks of the army had not been able to get up; that the prodigious consumption of the two preceding days had nearly exhausted their ammunition, several guns having only a few rounds left; that the magazines of the army had not been able to follow its advance; in fine, that it was indispensable to regain Bohemia to prevent the dissolution of the army. These reasons, urged with the authority of the commander-in-chief, and supported by such facts, proved decisive; and a

35.  
Council of  
war among  
the Allies,  
when it is  
resolved to  
retreat.

\* *Ante*, Chap. lxiii. § 20.

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1 Jom. iv.  
395. Bout.  
34, 35. Lond.  
120, 121.

retreat was agreed to against the strenuous advice of the King of Prussia, who foresaw to what risk it would expose the Allied cause, and in an especial manner his own dominions. But it is evident that they were mere covers, put forward to conceal the sense of a defeat: no victorious army ever yet was stopped in its career by want of ammunition, and somehow or other the successful party hardly ever fails to find food.<sup>1\*</sup>

36.  
Extraordi-  
nary difficul-  
ties as to the  
line of retreat.

But although retreat was thus resolved on before dark on the 27th, it was by no means equally clear how it was to be effected. Vandamme was master of the road by Pirna; that by Freiberg had been cut off by the successes of the King of Naples. Thus the two great roads, those by which the army had traversed the mountains, were in the enemy's hands; and the intermediate range between them was crossed only by country or inferior roads, which, amidst the torrents of rain which were falling, and the innumerable chariots and guns which would have to roll over them, would soon be rendered almost impassable. There was every reason to fear that the Allied columns, defiling with these numerous encumbrances in the narrow gorges, traversed by these broken-up roads, would fall into inextricable confusion, and at the very least lose a large part of their artillery and baggage. Schwartzberg, however, deemed the risk of a prolonged stay in presence of the enemy, after the disasters of his left, more than sufficient to counterbalance these dangers; and therefore, though Klenau came up on the night of the 27th, the retreat was persisted in the following day. The army was ordered to march in three columns; the first under Barclay de Tolly, with the Prussians of Kleist, on Peterswalde; the second under Colloredo, on Altenburg; and the third, led by Klenau, on Marienberg.<sup>1</sup> Wittgenstein was intrusted with the command of the rearguard; and Ostermann, who, with a division of Russian guards and cuirassiers, had been left to oppose Vandamme on the side of Pirna, was ordered to fall back towards Peterswalde.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Bout. 34,  
35. Jom. iv.  
396, 397.  
Fain, ii. 288.  
GrosseChron.  
i. 431, 440.

\* The preceding account of Moreau's wound and death, and the council of war which assembled to determine on the retreat, is entirely confirmed, and in part taken from the statement made to me, by my late friend Lord Cathcart, who was with the Emperor Alexander the whole time, and both witnessed Moreau's fall at his side, and was present at the conference.

Early on the morning of the 28th, Napoleon, according to his usual custom, visited the field of battle. It may be conceived what a ghastly spectacle was presented by the ground, on which, within the space of a league round the walls, three hundred thousand men had combated for two days with determined resolution, under the fire of above a thousand pieces of cannon. The wounded had, for the most part, been transported during the night into the town by the efforts of the French surgeons and the unwearied zeal of the inhabitants, who on this occasion, as after the battle of Bautzen, exhibited in its full lustre the native benevolence of the Saxon character. But the dead still lay unburied, accumulated in frightful heaps, for the most part half naked, having been stripped by those fiends in woman's form, whom so prodigious a concourse of men had attracted in extraordinary numbers to the scene of wo. They lay piled above each other in vast masses around and within the Mocsinski redoubt, before the Dippoldiswalde and Plauen barriers, near Löbda, and in the environs of the Grosse Garten. The profound excitement which the war had produced throughout the civilised world, was there manifest; for the corpses of the slain exhibited all nations and varieties of men, both of Asia and Europe: the blue-eyed Goth lay beneath the swarthy Italian; the long-haired Russian was still locked in his death-struggle with the undaunted Frank; the fiery Hun lay athwart the stout Norman; the lightsome Cossack and roving Tartar reposed far from the banks of the Don or the steppes of Samarcand. Cuirasses, muskets, sabres, helmets, and cartouches-boxes, lay strewn in endless disorder, which the inhabitants, stimulated by the love of gain, were collecting, with the vast numbers of cannon-balls which had sunk into the earth, for the French artillery and stores.<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon was far from being insensible to the magnitude of the wreck, and gave orders that the principal Saxon sufferers by the siege should be indemnified as far as possible; and then rode on to the height where Moreau had been struck, and caused the distance to the battery from whence the shot issued to be measured, which proved to be two thousand yards. The vast array of the Allies was already out of sight; a few horsemen

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37.

Appearance  
of the field of  
battle.  
Aug. 28.

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 262,  
263. Fain, ii.  
288, 294.  
Lab. i. 323.

38.

Napoleon sets  
out in pursuit.

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alone observed the approach of the French, who were actively engaged in the pursuit. Seeing he could not overtake them, the Emperor turned aside and rode to Pirna, where he inquired minutely into what had passed there during the two preceding eventful days. The Prince of Würtemberg, he learned, had that morning been engaged with Vandamme's corps, and was retiring in good order towards Töplitz, closely pursued by that general: Murat, with his horse, was following on the traces of the left wing, on the road of Freiberg; and Marmont and St Cyr's columns were pursuing the centre on the intermediate roads. After sitting still an hour, he said, in the highest spirits, "Well, I think I have seen it all: make the Old Guard return to Dresden; the Young Guard will remain here in bivouac;" and, entering his carriage, returned to the capital.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 262,  
265. Fain, ii.  
288, 298.  
Lab. i. 322,  
324.

39.  
Great ability displayed by Napoleon in this battle.

The battle of Dresden is one of the most remarkable victories ever gained by Napoleon; and if it were memorable for no other reason, it will never be forgotten for this—it was the LAST pitched battle, on a scale commensurate with his former victories, he ever gained.\* The advance to Pirna seemed the fatal limit of his prosperous fortune: from the moment that he then relinquished the pursuit, he became involved in calamity; and disaster succeeded disaster till he was precipitated from the throne. Yet was this great battle a truly glorious achievement, worthy to be placed beside the brightest of his earlier career, and such as well might cast a long ray of light over the dark vista of misfortune by which it was succeeded. Anticipated by the Allies in their masterly march upon Dresden, well-nigh deprived of that vital stronghold by his never conceiving they would have the courage to attack it, he contrived, by extraordinary efforts, not only to arrive in time for its deliverance, but to discomfit the Allies by a signal defeat under its walls. This battle is the only one in his whole career in which Napoleon operated at once by both flanks, without advancing his centre; and the reason of his selecting this singular, and, in ordinary

\* The conflicts at Montmirail, Vauchamps, Champaubert, and Montereau, in the campaign of 1814, were combats, not battles: Ligny was a pitched battle, but it could not be called a decisive victory, at least like Napoleon's former ones; for no prisoners or standards, and few guns were taken.

circumstances, perilous mode of attack, was this—not only his position in front of the intrenched camp enabled him to do so without risk, while the great strength of the Allied centre forbade an attack on them in that quarter; but by gaining, by success at these two extremities, command of the roads of Freiberg and Pirna, he threw the Allies back, for their retreat to Bohemia, upon the intermediate inferior lines of communication across the mountains, where there was reason to hope that a vigorous pursuit would make them lose great part of their artillery and baggage. He afterwards adopted a similar mode of attack in the commencement of the Waterloo campaign; but his wings there being advanced at the same time, without any centre to support them, like the great fortress of Dresden, became unable to afford each other the requisite support, and lost for the Emperor advantages which had well-nigh reinstated his affairs.<sup>1</sup>

The fruits of this victory were as great as its conception had been felicitous. Thirteen thousand prisoners, almost all Austrians, were taken. Six-and-twenty cannons, eighteen standards, and a hundred and thirty caissons, fell into the hands of the enemy. Including the killed, wounded, and missing, on the two days, the Allied loss was not short of twenty-five thousand men, while the French were not weakened by more than half the number. But these results, important and dazzling as they were, especially as re-establishing the *prestige* of the Emperor's invincibility, were but a part of the consequences of the discomfiture at Dresden. Barclay had been ordered to take the road, by Döhma and Gieshübel, to Peterswalde; but the Russian officer who delivered the order said Altenburg, by mistake, instead of Peterswalde. Barclay understood him so: the consequence of which was, that Kleist alone, with his Prussians, was left to follow the great road by Pirna, and the Russians were thrown on the road by Dippoldiswalde and Altenburg, already encumbered with the prodigious accumulation of Austrian carriages. The highway was speedily cut through by the prodigious number of vehicles passing over it; the confusion of artillery and carriages of all sorts became inextricable.<sup>2</sup> Cannon and baggage-waggons

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
397. Bout.  
35.

40.  
Results of the  
battle on both  
sides.

<sup>2</sup> Lond. 121.  
Vaud. i. 127.  
Bout. 36, 37.  
Grosse Chron.  
i. 442, 456.

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41.  
Dreadful confusion in the Austrian line of retreat.

were abandoned at every step; and the disorder soon became extreme.

Different corps of different nations got intermingled in the crowded defiles: orders were given in a language which one-half who heard them did not understand: supplies of all sorts were wanting, and it was only by straggling on either side that the soldiers for some days could pick up a scanty subsistence. A great quantity of baggage and ammunition waggons fell into the enemy's hands; and before the troops had extricated themselves from the mountains, two thousand additional prisoners had been taken. The poet Körner, who had recovered of the wound he had so perfidiously received at the commencement of the armistice, received a ball in his breast, and died in the action: a few hours before it began, he had composed his immortal lines to his sword, the testament of his genius to his avenging countrymen.\* But the most sensible loss which the Allies sustained during the retreat, was that of General Moreau, whose great talents were never more required than at that period, to arrest the evils which then menaced the very existence of the Coalition. But Providence had decreed that the cause of virtue and justice should triumph by its own native strength, and owe nothing to the forces of the Revolution, even in their most exalted or blameless form.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 121,  
122. Jom. iv.  
397. Vaud. i.  
157. Bout.  
36, 37. Capet.  
x. 207.

42.  
Glaring errors of the Austrian commander on this occasion.

Great, however, as were the abilities displayed by Napoleon on this occasion, they would have failed in producing the results which took place, if he had not been seconded to a wish by the imbecility displayed in the *execution* of the attack upon Dresden. The original conception of that design was in the highest degree felicitous; and by succeeding in placing themselves in overwhelming strength before that capital, and on the direct line of the enemy's communications on the 25th, when Napoleon and his

\* Theodore Körner was killed at eight in the morning of the 26th August, in a field near the road from Schwerin to Gadebusch, close to a wood half a league from Rosenberg. A musket ball which had passed through the neck of his horse, but without killing it, pierced his stomach, and shattered the spine. He breathed his last a few minutes after receiving the wound. He fell with the first shot from the enemy. Count Hardenberg, a relation of the illustrious statesman, was killed by the same volley. They were both buried under an old oak near where they fell, amidst the universal tears of the corps to which they belonged. Körner's name is engraven on the rind of the tree; but he has left a more enduring memorial of his end in the noble song to his sword, written on the morning of the day on which he received his death-wound; and which,



Guards were still a full day's march off, they had completely out-generaled that vigilant commander, and brought him, beyond all question, to the very brink of destruction. Had they commenced the assault that afternoon, success was certain, for they were already six to one: St Cyr and his corps would have been beaten, and the whole defensive system of Napoleon on the Elbe broken through and destroyed.

Even when, by delaying the attack till next day, they had given time for Napoleon himself to come up, they might still, by commencing the assault early on the forenoon of the 26th, before the bulk of his Guards had arrived, have carried the place, with the additional lustre of having done so when the Emperor in person was in command. By delaying the attack till four in the afternoon, they gained nothing; for Klenau even then had not come up; and they had merely given time to Napo-

43.  
Great error  
in delaying  
the attack.

more even than all the actions recounted in this history, illustrates the heroic spirit with which Germany was then animated:—

"Thou sword upon my thigh,  
Those beaming glances why?  
Thou look'st so pleased on me,  
I've all my joy in thee."

Hurrah."

"In the belt of a gallant knight,  
My glance is ever bright;  
A freeman is my lord,  
And this makes glad the sword."

"Yes! trusty sword, I'm free,  
And fondly cherish thee;  
Dear as a bride thou art—  
The treasure of my heart."

"Ah! would thy vows were mine,  
As my iron life is thine!  
If our nuptial-knot were tied,  
Where dost thou fetch thy bride?"

"The trumpet blast at dawn,  
Ushers in our wedding morn;  
When the hollow cannons roar,  
We'll meet to part no more."

"Oh! happy bridal state,  
Al! anxiously I wait;  
Thou bridegroom, come with speed—  
Love's garland is thy meed."

"Why then, in scabbard dight,  
Dost clank, thou iron delight,  
So wild, so warlike now?  
My sword, why rattlest thou?"

"Well may I clang, Sir Knight,  
I hunger for the fight;  
All wild and glad of battle,  
Thus in my sheath I rattle."

"Yet keep that narrow cell;  
It suits my darling well:  
Bide in thy chamber lone,  
Till I claim thee for my own."

"Ah! tarry not, I pray,  
For in love's garden gay,  
The rose has a bloody shroud,  
And blossoming Death looks proud."

"Now come from thy scabbard coy,  
My pride, my darling joy!  
Where our gather'd kindred stand,  
Thou shalt glitter in my hand."

"Oh! sumptuous wedding cheer,  
What goodly guests are here!  
Ay, now the steel will gleam  
Like a bride in the morning beam."

"Up! up! ye warriors stout;  
Out! German riders, out!  
Do ye feel your hearts grow warm?  
Take the loved one to your arm."

Erst following at your side,  
A stolen glance she tried;  
Now in the face of day,  
God gives the maid away.

Haste! give her lips the pledge—  
A kiss to the iron edge!  
Tide good, or evil tide,  
Curst he who fails his bride.

Now bid the charmer sing,  
While sparkling sword-blades ring;  
'Tis our marriage matin's peal;  
Hurrah! thou bride of steel!

Hurrah."

KÖRNER'S *Lyre and Sword*: Edinburgh, 1841.—An animated and faithful translation; but even the kindred English tongue can convey no idea of the force and spirit-stirring fire of the original.

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leon to bring up sixty thousand additional men for the defence. It was impossible to expect to carry a fortified place, garrisoned by eighty thousand men, by a *coup-de-main*: the stroke was now too late, and should not have been delivered. The dispositions next day were equally faulty: for Schwartzenberg, contrary to all advice, insisted on extending his left over the open ground beyond Plauen, without any support against Murat's cavalry, to which, in consequence, it fell an easy prey; while by throwing it back, up the side of the ravine of Tharandt, it would have been altogether secure on the top of its precipitous banks from attack. To crown the whole, he placed inexperienced infantry there, without horse to cover them, when thirty thousand noble cavalry were massed together in useless strength behind the centre, which was already so strong from its position on the heights, and the prodigious array of artillery by which it was defended, as to be beyond the reach of danger.

44.  
Great divisions at the Allied headquarters.

In justice to Schwartzenberg, however, it must be observed, that these glaring errors are not to be wholly ascribed to him. It is no easy matter, as he himself said, to command an army, when emperors and kings are with its general. Such were the dissensions which at this period prevailed at the Allied headquarters, that nothing but the most exalted spirit in the bosoms of the sovereigns who ruled its destinies, and the most indefatigable efforts on the part of the able diplomatists who were intrusted with its counsels, prevented the alliance from being broken up within a few days after it began the great contest for the deliverance of Europe. Hardenberg, Metternich, D'Anstett, Lord Aberdeen, and Sir Charles Stewart, laboured assiduously, and not without effect, to reconcile the conflicting jealousies and interests, but it was a herculean task; and nothing but a universal sense of the common danger which they all incurred, could have prevented a rupture taking place. They experienced the truth of the words of Tacitus: "*prospera omnes sibi vindicant, adversa uni solo imputantur.*"<sup>1</sup> \*

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 120.

No one would acknowledge responsibility for the advance against Dresden after it failed: to hear the opinions

\* All claim the credit of prosperous actions: disasters are ascribed to one alone.

of the military council, you would imagine it had been forced on the army against the universal opinion of its leaders. The Russians loudly exclaimed against the Austrians as the authors of all the calamities, and referred, not without secret satisfaction, to the magnitude of the losses which they, and they alone, had sustained. The Austrians replied, that if Barclay had obeyed Schwartzberg's order to advance on the forenoon of the 27th, all would yet have been repaired. The Prussians lamented a retrograde movement which would, to all appearance, deliver up Berlin to the cruel exactions of the enemy, and paralyse the rising spirit of Germany by the exhibition of its northern capital in chains. Conferences, political as well as military, were frequent during the retreat; the troops of the different nations would take no orders but from their own generals; it was hard to say who really governed the army, or whether it had any direction at all. Schwartzberg deemed it advisable, situated as he was, to avoid any general action, and remain wholly on the defensive; and it was apparent to all, that if Napoleon persevered in making propositions, there was great probability they would be listened to. Such was the untoward prospect of affairs at the Allied headquarters, when the face of events was entirely changed, unanimity and concord restored to the combined chiefs, and confidence and mutual esteem to their followers, by a series of events in the exterior circle of the conflict, so marvellous that they defeated all human calculation, and converted the recriminations of misfortune into the song of triumph, over the whole Allied states.<sup>1</sup>

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45.

All lay the blame on each other, and there is no real command.

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 120,  
122.

On the very day on which Napoleon gained his decisive success before Dresden, Vandamme, following up his instructions, to throw himself upon the rear of the Allied army and await the issue of events before that city, had crossed the Elbe at Königstein, and been engaged with Ostermann, who had been left to watch him with the division of the old Russian Guards and the Russian division of Prince Eugene of Würtemberg. The French general advanced towards Pirna, in order to intercept the line of the enemy's retreat, and the disproportion of force gave him good reason to hope that he would be able to

46.

Movements of  
Vandamme  
against Ostermann.

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do so;\* for he had twenty-seven thousand infantry, three thousand cavalry, and eighty pieces of cannon; whereas the Russian had only seventeen thousand at his disposal. Ostermann in the first instance fell back also towards Pirna; but on the day following, being that on which Napoleon halted his Guard at that place, he was obliged, by the retreat of the Allies and its occupation by the French, to change the direction of his retreat, and retire towards Peterswalde. Vandamme had got before him on the high-road to that place, and the Russians had to fight their way through the enemy's ranks at Gieshübel and Nollendorf. Ostermann's grenadiers, however, forced the passage after a sharp encounter, and he reached Peterswalde, where he collected his forces, and prepared to oppose a stout resistance to Vandamme, who, having failed in barring the way to his columns, was now preparing to follow closely upon his footsteps, and press him vigorously with all his forces.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kausler, 654. *Jom.* iv. 398. *St Cyr*, iv. 128, 129. *Bout.* 40, 41. *Vand.* i. 158.

47.

Great interests depending on this conflict.

A great issue now depended on the efforts of these intrepid generals; nothing less than the ruin of the Allied army, or the destruction of the corps which had so fearlessly descended into its rear, was at stake. All the roads from Saxony in that direction through the Erzgebirge range, terminate at Töplitz, in the Bohemian plain. If, therefore, Vandamme could make himself master of that point of intersection, he would be in a situation to prevent the Allies debouching from the mountains; while the King of Naples on the one road, Marmont and St Cyr in the centre, and Napoleon with the guards on the left pass, pressed the rear of their columns, and thus exposed them to almost certain ruin when entangled with several thousand carriages among those narrow defiles and inhospitable ridges. On the other hand, if the French were defeated, they ran a still greater risk of being destroyed by the retiring masses of the grand Allied army, who would fight with the energy of despair to reopen their communication with the Bohemian plains. Thus, both parties had equal motives for exertion; both saw clearly the vital importance of the contest,

\* He had fifty-two battalions, twenty-nine squadrons, eighty guns.—KAUSLER, 653; and Napoleon has told us, "they were 30,000 strong."—See NAPOLEON *to St Cyr*, 17th August 1813.—*St Cyr*, iv. 367.

and the meanest soldier in the ranks was as strongly impressed with it as their chiefs. Vandamme now recollected the Emperor's words, that to him it would be given to receive the sword of the conquered, and that now was the time to win his marshal's baton. Ostermann was penetrated with the conviction, that on his efforts, and those of his brave guards, would depend the safety of their beloved Emperor, and both were firmly resolved to conquer or die on the ground where they stood.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
398, 399.  
Bout. 40, 41.  
Fain, ii. 312,  
313. Lab. i.  
331.

Vandamme, sensible of the value of time in the critical operation which had been intrusted to him, and aware that the Young Guard was at Pirna, to give him the support which Napoleon had promised him if required, eagerly descended on the morning of the 29th from the mountains, and approached the Russians, who had taken post in a good position in the plain between CULM and Töplitz, little more than half a league in advance of the latter town. Ostermann's forces, however, were now much reduced; from the losses and detachments of the preceding days, he could not collect above fourteen thousand men to defend his posts, and the French had at least double the number. Already the near approach of the enemy had spread the most violent alarm among its inhabitants; the whole *corps diplomatique* in particular had taken to flight, and were already far advanced on the road to Deutsch and Lahn. The King of Prussia, who was there, and remained at his post, alone succeeded by his coolness in preserving some degree of order in the rear of the combatants. The French general, conceiving he had only to deal with the broken and dejected remains of the army beaten at Dresden, at first brought forward his troops as they successively came up into action, and hurried with only nine battalions to assault the Russian left wing. This rash attempt was speedily repulsed; but the arrival of the division of Mouton Duvernet restored the combat in that quarter, and the Russians in their turn were compelled to give way. An obstinate action with various success now took place over the whole line: the villages of Straden and Priesten were successively carried by the division Philippon, which had just come up;<sup>2</sup> but the latter village was shortly after retaken, and after being three times lost and won at the point of

48.  
Battle of  
Culm.  
Aug. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Bout. 40.  
Jom. iv. 399.  
Lond. 123.  
Fain, ii. 314.

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49.

Heroic resistance of the Russian guards.

the bayonet, finally remained in the hands of the Russians.

The weight of the French attack, however, was directed against the Russian left, where the line stood in the open plain; and Ostermann, seeing this, brought up three regiments of the Russian guards to the menaced point—the Bonnet d'Or, Preobazinsky, and Simonefsky grenadiers; and the heroic resistance of these incomparable troops, the flower and pride of the Russian army, opposed a wall of steel to the French, which all the efforts of the assailants were unable to pass. In vain the French batteries were advanced to within pistol-shot, and sent a storm of grape through the Russian lines; in vain company after company was swept away by the terrific discharges of their musketry; these heroic troops stood firm, constantly closing to the centre as their ranks were thinned. They found there the Russian Thermopylæ, and the greater part of them perished where they stood; but, like the three hundred Spartans under Leonidas, they decided the fate of the world by their blood.\* A strong French column in the evening advanced against Priesten, carried it by assault, and moved on to attack the grand Russian battery in the centre; but the heroism of the guards had gained the requisite time. General Diebitch and the Grand-duke Constantine at this moment arrived with the cavalry and some grenadiers of the Russian Guard, with which this menacing column was stopped; and Vandamme, seeing that the Russians were now receiving considerable reinforcements, drew off for the night to the ground he occupied before the action.<sup>1</sup>

50.

Vandamme remains firm on the next day.

Prudence now counselled a retreat to the French general; for the superiority of force which he had the first day was at length turned the other way; and the increasing force of the enemy, who were seen issuing at all the passes from the mountains, threatened not only to expose him to ruinous odds, but even might entirely overwhelm his corps. He had been promised support, however, by Napoleon, and distinctly ordered to advance to Töplitz; the Young Guard, eight-and-twenty thousand strong, was

\* C'est sans triompher que le nombre l'accable,  
Et sa male Vigueur toujours en même point,  
Succombe sous la force, et ne lui cede point."

CORNEILLE. *Cinna*, Act iv. S. 1.

only a few hours' march in the rear ; and he never for a moment conceived it possible that, having assigned to him the onerous duty of cutting off the retreat of the right wing of the Allied army, that great commander would leave him unsupported in the perilous attempt.\* The marshal's baton danced before his eyes : instances were frequent, in the earlier history of the revolutionary wars, of a similar act of daring being attended with the most glorious results ; in war, as in love, he who nothing ventures will nothing win. Influenced by these considerations, to which the native resolution of his character gave additional weight, he resolved to maintain his ground, and disposing his corps, now reduced by the losses of the preceding days to twenty-three thousand men, in the best order, he awaited the approach of the Allies in the neighbourhood of Culm.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
315. Jom. iv.  
400, 401.  
St Cyr, iv.  
128, 129.

The hourly increasing numbers of the enemy now gave them an opportunity, of which they skilfully availed themselves, of crushing the audacious invader who had thus broken into their rear in the hope of receiving the sword of the conquered. Their dispositions were speedily made. Vandamme had taken post on the heights in front of Culm, looking towards Töplitz, his right resting on the foot of the mountains—his centre crossing the great road leading to Pirna—his left in the plain, as far as the hamlet of Zigeley. This was the weak point of his line, as the ground afforded no natural advantages ; and the Allied generals therefore resolved to overwhelm it with superior forces, and drive both it and the centre up against the mountains, where escape, at least for the artillery and carriages, would be impossible. With this view, Barclay de Tolly, who had now assumed the command, as well from his rank as in consequence of the wound of Ostermann, who had lost an arm on the preceding day, directed the Russians under Raefskoi to attack on the left ; while the right, composed of twenty squadrons of Russian cavalry, under the orders of Prince Gallitzin, and the Austrian corps of Colloredo, with the division Bianchi in reserve, was destined to make the decisive onset on the French left,<sup>2</sup> which was unsup-

51.  
Dispositions  
of the Rus-  
sians to at-  
tack him.  
Aug. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Bout. 42.  
Lond. 126,  
127. Lab. i.  
333. Vaud. i.  
160. Jom iv.  
401, 402.

\* Vandamme received, on the night of the 29th, a distinct order from Berthier to push on to Töplitz ; it was brought to him by a colonel of the Swiss état-major.—JOMINI, iv. 401, note.

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ported in the plain. A screen of Russian light and heavy horse stretched across the chaussée, with a powerful artillery, and united the right and left wings. The total force thus brought to bear against Vandamme was little short of sixty thousand men, of whom ten thousand were admirable horse.

52.  
Second battle  
of Culm.  
Aug. 30.

The battle began by a vigorous charge of the Russian cavalry on the flank of the French left in the plain, which being outflanked, and turned at the same time that Colloredo's corps advanced against its front, was speedily thrown into confusion, and driven up against the centre, in front of Culm. Steadily the Austrians moved directly towards that town, while the French left, now entirely broken, and pushed on by the cavalry in flank, was dispersed over the plain like chaff before the wind. Vandamme, now seriously alarmed, despatched a fresh brigade to stop the progress of the enemy on the left; but they too were overwhelmed in the confusion, and the Allied horse, sweeping round their rear, had already approached the village of Arbesau, not far distant from the great road to Pirna. At the same time a sharp conflict was going on on the right, and the Russians were gradually gaining ground on their adversaries posted on the slopes of the mountains. Matters were in this critical state when a loud fire of musketry, followed by several explosions, was heard on the summit of the pass, towards Nollendorf, directly in the rear of the French column, and on the only line by which they could escape. Joy at first illuminated every countenance in the French ranks, for no one doubted that it was the Young Guard pushed on from Pirna to their support, which would speedily re-establish the fortunes of the day. But this satisfaction was of short duration, and was converted into corresponding consternation when the Prussian standards were seen on the summits; and the news circulated through the ranks, that it was Kleist with eighteen thousand Prussians who thus lay directly on their only line of retreat. In effect, the Prussian general, who had been directed to retire by Schönwald and Nollendorf, and had the evening before received orders from Alexander to descend upon the right flank of the French, towards Graupen, finding the road which he followed insupportably bad,<sup>1</sup> had made his way

<sup>1</sup> Kausler, 658. Jom. iv. 401, 402. Bout. 43. Fain, ii. 316, 317. St Cyr, iv. 129. Grosse Chron. i. 38, 42.



across to the great chaussée, and had just seized and blown up some French caissons at the top of the pass.

And now a scene ensued, unparalleled even in the varied annals of the revolutionary war. Vandamme, seeing his danger, drew off his troops from the heights on the right in front of Culm, and rallying as well as he could the broken remains of his left, formed his whole force into a column, the cavalry in front, under Corbineau, the artillery in the centre, and the infantry on the flanks and rear. Having made these dispositions, which were the best that circumstances would admit, he began his retreat, and got through Culm in safety. But in the little plain beyond, extending to the foot of the gorge of Tellnitz, the Russian and Austrian horse precipitated themselves on all sides upon the retreating mass, while a formidable array of artillery, by incessant discharges, threw its rear into confusion. Disorder was already spreading rapidly in the ranks, and Vandamme had resolved to sacrifice his guns to save his men, when, to complete their misfortunes, the advanced guard reported that the defile which they must immediately ascend was occupied in strength by a Prussian corps! Despair immediately seized the troops; all order and command were lost. Corbineau, at the head of the horse, dashed up the pass with such vigour, that though the ascent was so steep that in ordinary circumstances they could hardly have ascended at the gentlest trot, he pushed right through the Prussian column at the gallop, cut down their gunners, and seized their artillery, which, however, he could not carry away, and got clear through.<sup>1</sup>

The Prussians now imagined that they were themselves cut off, and at the point of ruin; and their whole infantry, breaking their ranks, rushed like a foaming torrent headlong down the defile, to force their way through the barrier which seemed to oppose their retreat at its foot. In the middle of the gorge they met the French column, in similar disorder and impelled by the same apprehensions, which was struggling for life and death to get up, with the Russians thundering in their rear! A scene of indescribable horror ensued. Close pent in a steep and narrow pass, between overhanging scours and rocks, nearly thirty thousand men on the two sides, animated

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53.

Appearance  
of Kleist, and  
total defeat  
of the French.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
402. Bout.  
44. Fain, ii.  
319. Vaud. L  
161. Sir R.  
Wilson, 44,  
note. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
466, 469.

54.

Dreadful  
struggle in  
the defile of  
Tellnitz.

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<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, to  
Berthier,  
Aug. 31,  
1813. St Cyr,  
iv. 389. Bout.  
44, 45. Jom.  
iv. 402, 403.  
Fain, ii. 318.  
319. Sir R.  
Wilson, 43.  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
467, 468.

with the most vehement passions, alike brave and desperate, contended elbow against elbow, knee against knee, breast against breast, mutually to force their way through each other's throng.\* In the confusion Kleist was seized by the French, but speedily delivered; Vandamme, however, was made prisoner by the Prussians. The remainder of his corps, who were crushed through or out of the defile, immediately dispersed through the neighbouring woods and wilds, and, throwing away their arms, made the best of their way over the mountains to Peterswalde, where they were received and re-armed by St Cyr's corps.† Nearly twelve thousand men, including Corbineau's cavalry, escaped in this manner, though in woful plight, and totally ruined as a military force; but the whole remainder of the corps, including both Vandamme's and Haxo's men, were either killed or made prisoners. The latter amounted to seven thousand; and sixty pieces of cannon, two eagles, and three hundred ammunition waggons were taken. The total loss of the French in the two days was not less than eighteen thousand men, while that of the Allies in the same period did not exceed five thousand.<sup>1</sup> ‡

On the morning of the 30th, thus fraught with disaster to Napoleon, he was with great complacency surveying

\* οἱ γὰρ ἄριστοι  
Κρηιόντες Τρωάς τε καὶ "Εκτορα δῖον ἔμμενον,  
Φεάξαντες δόρυ δουρί, σάκος σάκει προθυλινῶν  
Ἀσπίς ἀεὶ ἀσπίδι ἐρείδει, κόρυς κόρυν, ἀνὴρ δ' ἀνῆρ·  
Ψαῦον δ' ἰπποκομοὶ κόρυθες λαμπροῖσι γάλοισι  
Νευόντων ὥς πυκνοὶ ἐφίστασαν ἀλλήλοισιν  
"Εργεῖα δ' ἐπ' ὕσσοντο θρασυῶν ἀπὸ χειρῶν  
Σείμεν· οἱ δ' ἰθὺς φρόντον, μέμασαν δὲ μάχεσθαι.

*Iliad*, N, 128.

† "Generals Philippon and Duvernét are occupied in rallying what remains of their troops; their number, they think, exceeds 10,000. We are furnishing them with cartridges and cannon; in fine, we would put them in a respectable situation, if they can only succeed in recovering their spirits."—ST CYR to BERTHIER, 31st August 1813; ST CYR, iv. 389.

‡ "Of this number, no less than 3200 were killed and wounded in the Russian imperial guard, whose numbers at going into the battle did not exceed 8000 men, cavalry included. The great loss sustained by so small a body of men, being fully half of the infantry who were seriously engaged, is a decisive proof, when they were not broken, of the extreme severity of the action, and the gallantry of their resistance. This action deserves to be borne in mind as the most desperate and glorious engagement of any body of the Russian or German troops during the war, and is to be ranked beside the heroism of the British at Albuera, where, out of 7500 English engaged, the loss was 4300. It must be observed, however, that nearly half of the English loss was occasioned by the surprise of the Polish lancers, which cut off nearly three entire battalions; so that the amount of the respective loss is not in these instances an exact test of the comparative heroism of those worthy rivals in arms."—See LONDONDERRY, 124, 125, for Russian loss at Culm; and *ante*, Chap. lxvi. § 41, for British at Albuera.

the different positions of his corps on the map, and anticipating the brilliant accounts he was so soon to receive of the operations of Vandamme in rear of the enemy. "At this moment," said he to Berthier, "Marmont and St Cyr must have driven the Austrian rearguards on Töplitz; they will there receive the last ransom of the enemy. We cannot be long of hearing news of Vandamme; and we shall then know what advantages he has been able to derive from his fine position. It is by him that we shall finish in that quarter. We will leave some corps of observation, and recall the rest to headquarters. I calculate that, after the disasters experienced at Dresden, it will take at least three weeks for the army of Schwartzemberg to reorganise itself, and again take the field. It will not require so much time to execute my projected movement on Berlin." Such were Napoleon's views on the morning of that eventful day, and the forenoon was spent in making arrangements for his favourite design of marching on Berlin, which was at once to demonstrate the reality of his victory, and again spread the terror of his arms through the whole north of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

In the afternoon of the same day, the most alarming news began to spread from the side of Pirna. It was rumoured that a great disaster had been sustained beyond the mountains; it was even said that Vandamme's corps had been totally destroyed. Soon the frequent arrival of breathless and disordered horsemen confirmed the dismal intelligence; and at length Corbineau himself, wounded and covered with blood, made his way to the Emperor, still armed with the Prussian sabre which, in the *mêlée*, he had exchanged for his own. From him Napoleon heard authentic details of the extent of the calamity; and he learned with grief, that not only the grand Allied Army was saved, but that it would bear back to Prague the trophies of a victory. Napoleon received the details of the disaster coldly, and said—"To a flying enemy you must either open a bridge of gold or oppose a barrier of steel. Vandamme, it appears, could not oppose that barrier of steel." Then, turning to Berthier, he said, "Can we have written any thing which could have inspired him with the fatal idea of descending into the

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55.

Napoleon's  
views at this  
period for an  
attack on  
Berlin.

<sup>1</sup> Fain,  
312, 313.

56.

Manner in  
which he  
received the  
account of  
the disaster  
at Culm.

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
320, 321.

plain of Bohemia? Fain, look over the order-book." Nothing, however, it is said, was discovered to warrant the descent from Peterswalde. "Well," said he to Maret, "this is war! High in the morning—low enough at night. From a triumph to a fall is often but a step." Then, taking the compasses in his hand, he mused long on the map, repeating unconsciously the lines of Voltaire,<sup>1</sup>—

"J'ai servi, commandé, vaincu, quarante années;  
Du monde entre mes mains j'ai vu les destinées;  
Et j'ai toujours connu qu'en chaque événement,  
Le destin des états dépend d'un moment."\*

57.  
Reflections  
on the real  
causes of  
Vandamme's  
disaster.

But, in truth, without disputing the incalculable influence of a few hours, or even minutes, on the fate of nations during war, nothing is more certain than that, in this instance, the misfortunes of Napoleon were owing to himself; and that the attempt which he made, according to his usual custom, to throw the blame upon others, was as unjust as it was ungenerous. He maintained stoutly in writing, as well as speaking, thinking that Vandamme was killed, that he had given him positive orders to intrench himself on the summit of the mountains, and not descend into the gulf at their feet;† and yet, only two days before, Berthier, by his orders, had enjoined him "to march directly upon Töplitz;"‡ and on the very day on which the disaster occurred, (30th August,) Berthier had written to St Cyr, informing him of Vandamme's success on the first day against Ostermann, from which he anticipated the most glorious results.§ In fact, Napoleon himself admitted, in conver-

\* La Mort de Cesar, A. I. S. I.

† "That unhappy Vandamme, who seems to have been killed, had not left a single sentinel on the mountains, nor any reserve in any quarter; he engulfed himself in a hollow, without feeling his way in any manner. If he had only left four battalions and four pieces of cannon on the heights in reserve, that disaster would not have occurred. I had given him *positive orders to intrench himself on the heights, and encamp his corps there*, and send down into Bohemia nothing but parties to disquiet the enemy, and obtain news."—NAPOLEON to ST CYR, 1st September 1813; ST CYR, iv. 392.

‡ "*March direct to Töplitz; you will cover yourself with glory.*"—BERTHIER to VANDAMME, 29th August 1813.—"Three or four hours only were required to retreat to Nollendorf, where he would have been in an impregnable position; but Vandamme conceived he was not at liberty, after this positive order, to effect that movement. What would he have said to Napoleon, if, on his retreat, he had met him at Nollendorf, as he had been led to expect would be the case, and the enemy meanwhile, resuming his ground at Culm, had secured the retreat of the Grand Army?"—*Victoires et Conquêtes*, xxii. 5. Note.

§ "I have received your letter of the 6th, from Reinhard Grimme, in which you describe your position behind the 6th corps, [Marmont.] The intention of his Majesty is, that you support the 6th corps: but it is desirable that you should select for that purpose a road to the left, between the Duke of Ragusa

sation to St Cyr, that he should have moved forward the Young Guard from Pirna to support Vandamme; \* in which case not only would no disaster at all have been incurred, but the movement on Töplitz, which was ably conceived, would have led to the destruction of Kleist's corps, and the disorganisation of the whole right wing of the Allied army. Decisive success was within his grasp, when he neglected to seize it, and permitted the advantage to pass over to the enemy, by retaining his Young Guard inactive at Pirna, during the two most vital days of the campaign.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Grosse  
Chron. i. 473.  
Fain, ii. 298.  
Richter, ii.  
§ 91.

His panegyrists endeavour to account for this neglect, by observing that he was seized with vomiting at Pirna, and obliged to return to Dresden in great pain on the afternoon of the 28th. But, admitting this to have been true, it was no reason why he should not have advanced Mortier with the Young Guard to support a corps charged with so perilous and momentous a mission as that of stopping the retreat of a hundred thousand men. No man knew better than he did what risk is incurred in striving to obstruct the retreat of a large army; his own success on the Beresina must have been fresh in his recollection. Even on the night of the 29th it would have been time enough to have moved up the Young Guard; for they required only a few hours to march from Pirna to Peterswalde.† The truth was, that Vandamme neither disobeyed orders, nor was forgotten: he acted strictly according to his instructions, and was fully present to the Emperor's mind, who watched his march with the utmost anxiety. But Napoleon judged of present events by the past. He conceived that the apparition of thirty thou-

58.  
Failure of all  
attempts to  
exculpate  
Napoleon on  
this point.

and the corps of *General Vandamme*, who has obtained great success over the enemy, and made two thousand prisoners."—BERTHIER to St Cyr, 30th August 1813; St Cyr, iv. 388.

\* "The Emperor admitted to me, in conversation on the 7th September, that if he had not halted his guard at Pirna on the 28th, but on the contrary, followed it up on the traces of Vandamme, he would have found a great opportunity of striking a blow in the neighbourhood of Töplitz."—St Cyr, iv. 137, 138.

† "On the 29th in the evening, the Emperor must have known that Vandamme had fought the whole day, not only against the forces of Ostermann, but those which Barclay had brought up. He had, therefore, the whole of that night to make his dispositions, which a man such as he could easily have done in an hour; and if he conceived the position of Vandamme hazardous, as unquestionably it was, he had time to draw it back, or support it by his guard. The latter corps could have marched to Nollendorf or Peterswalde in a few hours; that is, before Kleist's Prussians, who were encamped on the night of the 29th at Fürstenwalde, had come up."—St Cyr, iv. 129.

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sand men in their rear, immediately after a severe defeat in front, would paralyse and discomfit the Allies as completely as it had done in the days of Rivoli and Ulm; and he was unwilling to engage the Young Guard in the mountains, as it might ere long be required for his own projected march upon Berlin. He forgot that his conscripts were not the soldiers of Austerlitz and Jena; that the Russian guards were not the Austrians of 1796; and that Ostermann was neither Alvinzi nor Mack.\*

59.  
Operations in  
Silesia at  
this period.  
Napoleon's  
instructions  
to Mac-  
donald, and  
his move-  
ments.

While these momentous events were going forward in the neighbourhood of Dresden, and in the Bohemian valleys, events of scarcely less importance were in progress among the ravines of Upper Silesia, and on the sandy plains in front of Berlin. Napoleon, on leaving the command of the army of Silesia to Macdonald, had given that general instructions of the most judicious description, and which, if duly followed out, would have probably prevented the dreadful disaster which he experienced. They were to "concentrate his troops and march towards the enemy, so as to be in a situation to give his aid to the operations of the Grand Army against Dresden or Bohemia; but, if attacked by superior forces, to retire behind the Queis and hold Görlitz; and if hard pressed, and the Emperor was far advanced in his attack, by Zittau, upon Prague, to retire to the intrenched camp at Dresden: keeping in view that his principal care should be to preserve his communication with him." Instead of following this judicious direction, Macdonald, who was inspired with that unfounded contempt for his adversaries which so often proved fatal to the lieutenants of Napoleon, no sooner found himself, after the departure of the Emperor to Dresden on the morning of the 24th,† at the

\* "Vandamme's defeat was a double misfortune; for it was to be ascribed to an evident oblivion of the first principles of war, which prescribe the pursuit to extremity of a beaten enemy. Napoleon should unquestionably have pursued, *à l'outrance*, the defeated army of the Allied sovereigns. There was the vital point of the war; all the rest was merely secondary, and could have been repaired. There also was the greatest chance of disorder, from the number of chiefs who commanded the different corps. If he had quitted Pirna to flee to the succour of Macdonald, routed on the Katzbach, the proceeding would have been at least intelligible, but he did not then know of it; and his return to Dresden, having no other object but to prepare the march upon Berlin, was one of the greatest faults of his whole career. Independent of its cutting short the fruits of victory, it became the principal cause of Vandamme's defeat."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoleon*, iv. 403, 404.

† *Ante*, Chap. lxxx. § 21.

head of three corps and a division of cavalry, numbering eighty thousand combatants, than he broke up early on the 26th to attack the enemy. Instead, however, of following up the Emperor's instructions to concentrate his forces, Macdonald, impressed with the belief that the enemy was continuing his retreat in the direction of Breslau, and that he had nothing to do but follow upon his traces, divided his troops, for the facility of marching and getting supplies, into five columns, spread out over a front twenty-four miles in breadth, from Schönau to Liegnitz. In this straggling manner they were to cross the Katzbach and advance towards Jauer; the right wing, under Lauriston, moving by Schönau and the foot of the mountains; the centre, under Macdonald in person, by the Wüthende-Neisse on Weinberg; while the left, led by Sebastiani and Souham, in the absence of Ney, who had been despatched to command the army destined to act against Berlin, was to move by Liegnitz to pass the KATZBACH there, and fall on the right of the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
373, 410.  
Vict. et  
Conq. 80, 81.  
Vaud. i. 145.

By a singular coincidence, Blücher, having rested his troops in their position in front of Jauer on the 24th and 25th, and being informed of the departure of the Emperor for Dresden on the morning of the first of these days, which the halt of his advanced guard on the Katzbach entirely confirmed, had on the very same day broken up from his ground to resume the offensive. He kept his troops, however, much more in hand, and was better qualified in consequence to take advantage of any omission on the part of his adversaries, or guard against disaster on his own side. He directed his three corps to pass the Katzbach between Goldberg and Liegnitz; York and Sacken on the right, towards the latter place, directing their attack against Ney's corps; and Langeron on the left, on the side of Goldberg, moving towards Lauriston and Macdonald. At two o'clock in the afternoon, the troops were so far advanced that the enemy were in sight, and Blücher made his dispositions for a general attack.<sup>2</sup>

60.  
Simultaneous  
advance of  
Blücher  
against Mac-  
donald.

<sup>2</sup> Grosse  
Chron. i.  
474, 480.  
Schoell, iv.  
361, 362.  
Bout. 14, 15.  
Vaud. i. 145.  
Plötho, ii. 87.

The better to conceal his movements from the enemy, and confirm them in the illusion under which they laboured, that the Allies were flying before them, he

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61.

Blucher's  
disposition to  
attack the  
enemy.

<sup>1</sup> Blucher's  
Official  
Account,  
Schoell,  
Recueil, iv.  
361, 362.  
Lab. i. 327.  
Bout. 14, 15.  
Vaud. i. 145.  
Ploto, ii.  
87, 88.

concealed his troops behind some eminences which lay in their front, on the plateau of Eichholz, and awaited the movements of his opponents. A heavy rain, accompanied with thick mist, which had fallen the whole day, contributed to conceal the movements of the opposite armies from each other; and it was only some Prussian batteries placed on the top of the eminences, which, by the vivacity of their fire, made the French suspect that any considerable body of the enemy were in their way, and that a general engagement might be expected. Macdonald immediately gave orders for his columns to deploy at all points between Weinberg and Klein Tintz; but it required a long time for the orders to be conveyed along so extensive a line; and Blucher, seeing that the enemy had only partially crossed the ravine of the Neisse, so that the troops which had got through were in a great measure unsupported, and judging the opportunity favourable, and the enemy unprepared, gave the signal for attack.<sup>1</sup>

62.

Battle of the  
Katzbach.

Aug. 26.

Macdonald's right, so far as hitherto come up, when thus unexpectedly assailed, was supported by the rocky banks of the Wüthende-Neisse; but his left was in an elevated plain beyond that river, which its rear columns were still crossing, wholly uncovered except by the cavalry under Sebastiani, the squadrons of which were at that moment engaged in passing the defile. Blucher, perceiving the weak point of his adversary's line, detached Wassilchikoff, at the head of the cavalry of Sacken's corps, to charge the French horse which had mounted upon the plateau, and so uncover their left. This order was immediately executed, and with the happiest effect. The Russian cavalry, superior in number, and greatly more experienced, approached the French dragoons on the extreme left, both in front and flank; while Karpoff's Cossacks, who had been sent round by a long detour, were to threaten their rear in the middle of the action. Sebastiani's horse, little prepared for the danger, had to struggle through the narrow defile of Kroitsch at Nieder Crain, already encumbered with the whole artillery of Ney's corps, which was passing it at the time. The consequence was, that the squadrons arrived successively on the plateau on the other side, where they were immediately charged



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by a formidable body of horse, four thousand strong, in close array, both in front and flank. Unable to resist the shock, the French dragoons were driven back headlong into the defile in their rear, from which they had just emerged: two brigades of infantry, which were brought up to support them, shared the same fate: Sacken's main body now came up, and as the incessant rain prevented the muskets going off, charged with loud hurrahs with the bayonet against the unprotected infantry of Ney's corps, which broke, and was driven headlong over the precipices into the roaring Katzbach and Wüthende-Neisse, where vast numbers were drowned.\* The guns, still entangled in the defile, to the number of twenty-six, with their whole ammunition waggons, were taken, and fifteen hundred prisoners on this wing fell into the enemy's hands.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kausler, 639, 640.  
Bout. 14, 15.  
Sacken's Official Account.  
Schoell, Recueil, iii. 80, 81. Jom. iv. 411, 412.  
Plotho, ii. 89, 90.

To complete their misfortunes, Souham, who was marching towards Liegnitz, still further to the French left, hearing the violent cannonade to his right, turned aside, and, moving in its direction, arrived at the mouth of the defile of Nieder Crain at six o'clock. This movement, ably conceived and in the true military spirit, would in ordinary circumstances have probably restored the battle, by throwing a fresh division into the scale when the Allies were disordered by success. As matters stood, however, it only aggravated the disaster. Souham's men arrived at the edge of the ravine of Kroitsch, just as Sebastiani's horse were beginning to break on the plateau opposite. Uniting to Sebastiani's cuirassiers, which were left in reserve, Souham immediately led his men down the defile, and hastened to ascend the front, in hopes of reaching the opposite plateau in time to arrest the disorder. But just as they began to mount the gorge on the opposite side of the glen, they met the torrent of fugitives from the other side, who were hurrying down, with the bloody Russian and Prussian sabres glancing in their rear. The confusion now became inextricable.<sup>2</sup> The dense and ardent columns pressing up, were for the most part overwhelmed by the disordered mass of horse and

63.  
Defeat of Souham on the French left.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. iv. 412, 413.  
Kausler, 640, 641.  
Vict. et Conq. xxii. 82, 83.  
Grosse Chron. i. 479, 481.

\* The name "*Wüthende-Neisse*," (mad or furious Neisse,) indicates with what a raging torrent that stream, at ordinary seasons insignificant, and fordable in every part, descends during floods from the Bohemian mountains.

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foot, mixed together, which was driven headlong down; and such of the battalions and squadrons as succeeded in forcing their way through the throng, and reached the summit, were speedily swept away and driven back into the gulf when attempting to deploy, by the impetuous charges of a victorious and superior enemy, now firmly established on the summit, who with loud hurrahs asserted the triumph of Germany.

64.  
Continuation  
of the battle  
on the right  
and centre.

While this decisive success was in the course of being gained on the Allied right, their left, under Langeron, had also come into collision with the French right, under Lauriston, near Hennesdorf. The combat there was more equal, and very obstinate: both sides stood their ground with great resolution; but, towards night, the French general having learned the disaster on his left, fell back, still, however, in good order, to Prausnitz. The action seemed over for the day, when an accidental circumstance renewed it, and augmented the losses of the French general. At nine at night, two fresh divisions of Ney's corps, now under the orders of Souham, having come up, Macdonald in haste crossed them over the Katzbach, at the ford of Schmogwitz, below the confluence of the Neisse, and directed them against the extreme right of Sacken's corps, now advanced to the very edge of the plateau, and engaged in driving the other division and Sebastiani's horse into the flooded torrents at the foot of the precipitous banks. These divisions were under the command of General Tarayre; they brought with them sixteen pieces of cannon, and ascended to the top of the plateau with a good countenance. Sacken, however, who had received intelligence of their approach, was on his guard: his troops were readily made to front to the right, and these fresh divisions were forced by Count Lieven and General Neweroffski again over the Katzbach, with considerable loss.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sacken's  
Official  
Account.  
Schoell,  
Rec. iii. 81.  
Bout. 16.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
83. Jom. iv.  
412, 413.  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
482, 490.

65.  
Great suc-  
cesses of the  
Allies on the  
following  
day.

Next day, Blucher early put his columns in motion to follow up his successes; while Macdonald, in great consternation, drew back his shattered bands towards Goldberg. It would seem, however, as if the elements had conspired with the forces of the enemy to accomplish his destruction. The floodgates of Heaven seemed literally opened the whole night; the rain fell without

an instant's intermission in tremendous torrents; and next morning, not only were the raging waters of the Neisse and the Katzbach unfordable at any point, but several of the bridges over those streams, as well as over the Bober, which also lay farther back in the line of the French retreat, were swept away by the floods which descended from the chain of the Riesengebirge. Lauriston, sorely pressed by Langeron, only succeeded in getting across the foaming torrents with the sacrifice of two-and-twenty pieces of cannon, his whole ammunition waggons, and two thousand prisoners. On the same day the Allies occupied Goldberg, and, continuing the pursuit, on the day following crossed the Katzbach, and drove the enemy back at all points towards the Bober. All the bridges over that river had been swept away except that at Buntzlau; and of necessity the whole French divisions were directed to that point. In the course of the rapid retreat thither, forty pieces of cannon, and several hundred ammunition waggons were sacrificed, and fell into the enemy's hands.<sup>1</sup>

A still more serious disaster, however, awaited the French in the course of this calamitous retreat. The division Puthod of Lauriston's corps had been despatched on the 26th, by a circuit at the foot of the mountains by Schönau and Jauer, in order to menace the rear of the Allies, and harass the retreat which was deemed on their part inevitable. He was already far advanced on his journey, when news of the disaster on the Katzbach arrived; and he at once felt the necessity of hastening to regain the main body of the army. Overlooked by the Allies in the first heat of the pursuit, Puthod succeeded without any great difficulty in retiring during the 27th; but, on arriving at the Bober, he found the bridge at Hirschberg swept away by the floods, and he was obliged to come down the right bank of the torrent to endeavour to effect a passage. Next morning, he got as far down as Lowenberg, but there too the bridge was destroyed; and after several vain attempts to re-establish it, he was obliged to wind his toilsome and devious way, anxiously looking out for a passage, towards Buntzlau.<sup>2</sup> In doing so, ill luck made him fall in with the advanced posts of Langeron's corps, who, wholly unsuspecting of his arrival, were pursuing their opponents towards the Bober.

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Aug. 27.

Aug. 28.

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
83. Jom. iv.  
414, 415.  
Bout. 16, 17.  
Ploto, ii.  
90, 94.

66.  
Disaster of  
Puthod's  
division.  
Aug. 29.

Aug. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Schoell, ii.  
83, 84.  
Vaud. i. 147.  
Jom. iv. 414,  
415.  
Richter, i.  
385, 386.  
Ploto, ii.  
118.

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67.

Which is surrounded and made prisoner.

The Russian general immediately collected his forces, and made dispositions for an attack.

General Korff, with his own horse and Czorbatoff's infantry, was despatched so as to cut off the retreat of the French back again up the Bober, which they seemed at first disposed to attempt; while Rudziwicz was posted on the road to Buntzlau, so as to render all escape impossible. Surrounded in this manner by greatly superior forces, in the most frightful of all positions, with a roaring impassable torrent in his rear, the brave Frenchman did not despair, but taking ground on the hill of Plagwitz, nearly opposite to Lowenberg, prepared to resist to the last extremity. There he was speedily assailed on every side; Rudziwicz attacked him on one flank, while Czorbatoff and Korff charged him on the other, and a powerful train of artillery opened upon his columns in front. Shaken by such an accumulation of force, as well as by the evident hopelessness of their situation, the French broke, and fled in wild confusion down the hill towards the river; on the banks of which they were, with the exception of a few who swam across the foaming torrent, made prisoners. Nearly two thousand were slain or drowned. A hundred officers, including Puthod himself, and his whole staff, three thousand private soldiers, two eagles, and twelve pieces of cannon, with the whole park of the division, fell into the enemy's hands, who did not lose a hundred men.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Langeron's Official Accounts. Schoell, ii. 83, 84. Bout. 17, 18. Jom. iv. 414, 415. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 84. Vaud. i. 147, 148. Richter. i. 385, 386.

68.

Results of the battle.

Such was the great battle of the Katzbach; the counterpart to that of Hohenlinden, and one of the most glorious ever gained in the annals of European fame. Its trophies were immense, and coincided almost exactly with those which had, twelve years before, attended the triumph of Moreau.\* Eighteen thousand prisoners, a hundred and three pieces of cannon, and two hundred and thirty caissons, besides seven thousand killed and wounded, presented a total loss to the French of twenty-five thousand men. When Macdonald re-formed his broken bands behind the Queis, he could with difficulty collect forty-eight thousand around his standards instead of seventy-three thousand, who, when he received the command from Napoleon, on the latter's setting out for Dresden,

\* Ante, Chap. xxxii. § 33.

crowded the banks of the Bober. The loss of the Allies was very trifling, considering the magnitude of the success gained: it did not exceed four thousand men. Indeed, there was scarcely any serious fighting; the French having been surprised by Blücher's attack when wholly unprepared for it, and subsequently prevented, by the dreadful weather and casual destruction of the bridges in their rear by the floods, from reuniting their broken bands, or forming any regular mass for resistance to the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

Great as were the successes thus achieved by the army of Silesia, and deservedly as they have given immortality to the name of Marshal Blücher, it may be doubted whether he would not more completely have succeeded in his object of disorganising the French army, if, instead of directing the weight of his forces against the enemy's left, he had thrown it against their right wing, placed at Goldberg. It was by that town that the whole French communications were preserved, and consequently a reverse there would have cut off Souham and the French left, and paralysed the whole army. On the other hand, when the line of operation on the French right was taken, it must be admitted that the Prussian general showed admirable skill in the selection of his ground for the principal attack, where a precipitous glen in the rear of the French rendered retreat on their part impossible; in the concealment of his own troops till half the enemy were past the ravine; and in then falling on the portion which was drawn up on the plateau, with such a concentration of infantry and cavalry as at once rendered resistance hopeless, and assistance through the narrow gorge impossible. The movements of the French general will not admit of a similar apology. In direct violation of the instructions of Napoleon—which were to concentrate his troops and decline battle except with a superiority of force—he rashly advanced against an enterprising general at the head of an army superior both in number and in warlike experience to his own. His troops were so scattered over a line from Liegnitz to Schönau, nearly twenty-four miles in length, that, when assailed in his centre and left on the most critical ground by the concentrated masses of the enemy, he had no adequate force at hand to arrest the disaster consequent on their first successful onset. Nor

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<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
84. Bout.  
19. Jom. iv.  
19. Vaud. i.  
148. Grosse  
Chron. i. 503.

69.

Reflections  
on the con-  
duct of the  
generals on  
both sides.

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was the management of his principal force less injudicious than its direction. By directing the bulk of his troops on the great road from Goldberg to Jauer, Macdonald would at once have menaced his opponent's communications, covered his own, and secured to himself a comparatively safe retreat in case of disaster ; whereas, by accumulating them on the left, he both uncovered his vital line, left untouched that of his adversary, and got his troops entangled in the rugged ravines of the Katzbach and Wüthende-Neisse, where any check was the certain prelude to ruin.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Cong. xxii.  
85, 86. Bout.  
20, 24.

70.  
Operations  
against Ber-  
nadotte ; and  
Napoleon's  
great anxiety  
for success  
over him.

While these important operations were going forward in Saxony, Bohemia, and Silesia, the campaign had also been opened, and an important blow struck to the north of the Elbe, in the direction of Berlin. Although nothing is more certain than that the vital quarter of the war was to be found on the Bohemian or Silesian frontier, where the great masses of the Allies were concentrated, yet it was by no means in that direction that Napoleon was desirous to begin hostilities, or most anxious to obtain success. He was much more intent upon making himself master of Berlin ; it was to clear his flank of Blücher, before engaging in that enterprise, that he opened the campaign by the march into Silesia. The first question which he asked when he returned to Dresden, beset by the Allied grand army, was, whether there was any news from Berlin ; and it was to prosecute that favourite design that he made the fatal stop of the Young Guard at Pirna, and returned himself to Dresden, in the midst of the pursuit of Schwartzberg's army. Napoleon, however, in his anxiety to dazzle the world by the capture of the Prussian capital, and to gratify his private pique by the defeat of Bernadotte, committed an extraordinary oversight in the estimate which he formed of the strength of the enemy to whom he was opposed in that quarter. He conceived that the Prince-Royal had only eighty-five thousand men in all under his command, including those who, under Walmoden, were opposed to Davoust at Hamburg ; whereas such had been the efforts made to reinforce the army in the north of Germany, and such the enthusiasm with which, under the sense of recent wrongs, they were seconded by the people,<sup>2</sup> that Bernadotte had now ninety thousand

2 Jom. iv.  
405. Vict.  
et Cong. xxii.  
49. Bout.  
48. Grosse  
Chron. i.  
516, 520.  
Plotho, ii.  
§ 52, 63.  
Appendix.

effective men under his immediate command, of whom nearly twenty thousand were admirable cavalry, besides above forty thousand who were opposite to Hamburg, or guarded the banks of the Lower Elbe. With this imposing force, he took post at Charlottenburg to cover Berlin, and concentrate his troops as soon as the denunciation of the armistice gave reason to anticipate a resumption of hostilities.

Meanwhile, Oudinot received orders to move forward and open the campaign ; but he not being prepared immediately to obey the Emperor's directions, the Prince-Royal advanced his headquarters to Potsdam, and his numerous army occupied Juterbock, Trebbin, and the villages of Saarmund and Belitz. On the 21st, the French army moved forward, consisting of three corps of infantry, viz. Bertrand's, Reynier's, and Oudinot's, with Arrighi's cavalry, mustering in all about eighty thousand men ; and, leaving the great road from Torgau to Berlin, made a flank movement towards the Wittenberg road. This speedily brought it in contact with the foremost posts of Bernadotte's army, and a rude conflict ensued with the advanced guard of Bulow's Prussians, which terminated in the forcing of the defile of Thyrow, and the establishment of Oudinot's forces on the heights behind Trebbin, and in front of Mittenwalde. Bernadotte, perceiving that a general battle was inevitable to prevent the enemy from making their way to Berlin, immediately gave orders for concentrating his forces, and the greater part of the day following was occupied in bringing them into line. But before they were all assembled, General Thumen, with a body of Prussians, was attacked by Reynier with so great a superiority of force at Trebbin, that he was forced to retire with considerable loss : the enemy carried the defile of Jühnsdorf, and the Prince-Royal, now seriously alarmed for his left, drew back the troops which he had at Trebbin and Mittenwalde, and brought up Tauenzein's whole corps to Blankenfelde. Oudinot's object in thus directing the weight of his forces against the enemy's left, was to beat his forces in detail towards Blankenfelde and Teltow, and force the Prince-Royal, driven up against Potsdam, to throw back his left, and abandon Berlin.<sup>1</sup> With this view, Reynier, in the centre, was directed to

71.  
Advance of  
Oudinot, and  
preparations  
for a battle.  
Aug. 21.

Aug. 22.

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
98, 99.  
Bernadotte's  
Official  
Account.  
Schoell,  
Recueil, i.  
72, 73.  
Bout. 50, 51.  
Jom. iv. 405,  
406.

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march on GROSS BEEREN; Bertrand, on the right, on Blankenfelde; while the commander-in-chief himself, with the left, moved on Ahrensdorf. He was not now above twelve miles from Berlin, which he fully expected to enter on the following day.

72.  
Battle of  
Gross Beeren.  
Aug. 23.

The battle began early on the morning of the 23d, by the French right, under Bertrand, who had the shortest distance to go over before arriving at the enemy, falling with great vigour on Tauenzein, who with his gallant Prussians held Blankenfelde. Bulow, who was in reserve behind the centre, upon this began to extend his columns to the left to aid his brethren in arms in that quarter. The movement, however, was countermanded by the Prince-Royal, for Tauenzein had made such a vigorous resistance, that not only were Bertrand's attacks repulsed, but several prisoners were taken, and the line was perfectly safe in that direction. Matters, however, wore a more serious aspect in the centre, where Reynier, at the head of twenty-four thousand Saxons, supported by a strong reserve, attacked and carried Gross Beeren, and established himself close to the very middle of the Allied line. Bernadotte, sensible of the dangerous consequences of this success, instantly took the most vigorous measures to arrest it. Bulow's whole corps was stopped in its march to the left, and brought up to the support of the centre, which had retired, still, however, bravely fighting, to some woods in the rear of the village. Meanwhile Reynier, little anticipating a second conflict, and deeming the combat over, was preparing to establish his bivouacs for the night on the ground he had won, when Bulow, at the head of thirty-five thousand Prussians, fell upon him.<sup>1</sup>

1 Berna-  
dotte's Offi-  
cial Report.  
Schoell,  
Recueil, i.  
73. Bout.  
52, 53. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
97. Jom. iv.  
406, 407.  
Plötho, ii.  
133.

73.  
Defeat of  
the French  
centre.

The measures of the Prussian general were taken with great ability, and he was admirably seconded by the intrepidity of his troops. While he himself advanced with the main body of his forces to recover Gross Beeren in front, Borstel, with a strong brigade, was moved on to Klein Beeren, in order to turn the right of the enemy, and the Swedish horse were advanced so as to threaten their left. The troops advanced in two lines, preceded by sixty pieces of cannon, and followed by the cavalry in reserve. Incessant rain had fallen the whole day, which prevented the muskets from going off; but the cannon



on both sides soon opened a tremendous fire, while, in rear of the Prussian pieces, their infantry advanced with the precision and coolness of the troops of the great Frederick. At length they arrived within grape-shot range, and Bulow immediately ordered a charge of bayonets by the front line deployed, while the second followed in column. The struggle, though violent, was not of long duration: Reynier, assailed by superior forces in front, could with difficulty maintain his ground: and the attack of Borstel on his right, and the opening of the Swedish cannon, supported by an immense body of Russian horse on his left, decided the conflict. He was already beginning to retreat when the Prussians in front, with loud hurrahs, charged with the bayonet. Gross Beeren was speedily won; several batteries were carried; and the Allied horse, by repeated charges on the left flank, completed his defeat. Oudinot's corps, alarmed by the violence of the cannonade at this period, stopped their advance on Ahrensberg, and, hastening to the centre, came up in time to arrest the disorder. Behind these fresh columns the broken Saxons were enabled to reform; but it was too late to regain the day. The Prussians, indeed, ignorant of the strength of the new army which they had thus encountered in the twilight, retired from the pursuit, and even at the moment evacuated Gross Beeren; but the defeat of the French centre determined the retreat of their left; their whole army retired to Trebbin, while Bulow reoccupied Gross Beeren, and Tauenzein advanced to Jühnsdorf.<sup>1</sup>

Although the battle of Gross Beeren was not attended with such extensive trophies in the field as those of Culm or the Katzbach, yet in its moral influence, and the effects which it ultimately had on the fortunes of the campaign, it was almost equal to either of these memorable conflicts. Fifteen hundred prisoners, thirteen cannon, and a large quantity of baggage, were taken; but these were its most inconsiderable results. The moral influence of the defeat of the attack on Berlin was immense. Great had been the consternation in that capital when the enemy's columns were advanced almost to within sight of its steeples, and every house shook with the discharges of their cannon; they remembered Jena and six years of

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<sup>1</sup> Bout. 53,  
54. Jom. iv.  
407, 408.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
99, 100.  
Vaud. i. 166,  
167. Plotho,  
ii. 139. Grosse  
Chron. i.  
541, 549.

74.  
Results of the  
battle.

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bondage, and every heart throbbed with emotion. Proportionally vehement was the joy when news arrived at ten at night that the enemy had been repulsed, that his columns were retiring, and the capital saved; and the general transports were increased by the circumstance, that the triumph was exclusively national—Bulow and Tauenzien having, with their new Prussian levies, almost alone had a share in the action. The warmest thanks were next day voted by the municipality to the Prince-Royal as their deliverer: joy beamed in every countenance; great numbers of the Saxon prisoners, carried away by the torrent of patriotic feeling, petitioned to be allowed to serve in the ranks of the Fatherland, and formed the nucleus of the Saxon corps which soon appeared in the lines of the Allies; while several of the officers, who had served under Bernadotte in the campaign of Wagram, wept for joy at finding themselves again in the patriotic ranks of Germany, and under the banners of their old general.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bernadotte's Official Account, Schoell, i. 75, 76. Bout. 53, 54. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 100, 101. Richter, i. 415.

75.  
Subsequent results of the battle.

The battle of Gross Beeren was immediately followed by other successes, naturally flowing from it, which materially augmented its trophies. On the 25th, Bernadotte moved forward, though very slowly and with extreme circumspection: but the enemy were so scattered that he could not fail, with his superiority in cavalry, to gain considerable advantages. Luckau had been fortified by the French, and garrisoned by a thousand men; but the governor not conceiving himself in sufficient strength to withstand the assault of the Allies, by whom he was soon surrounded, capitulated when summoned, with nine pieces of cannon, and considerable magazines. A still more serious disaster soon after occurred on the side of Magdeburg. Gerard, with his division, five thousand strong, had issued from that fortress as soon as he heard of the advance of Oudinot, in order to co-operate in the general movement against Berlin; but the reverse of Gross Beeren, of which, from the hostile feeling of the country, he had received no information, followed by the advance of the Allies, led him, without being aware of it, into the very middle of the enemy's columns. Finding Belzig occupied by the Cossacks of Chernicheff, he withdrew to Leibnitz, where he took post to await further

orders. There he was assailed next day by a division of the Prussians under Hirschfeld; and after a gallant resistance, being attacked in rear by Chernicheff's Cossacks, he was totally defeated, and compelled to take refuge in Magdeburg, with the loss of fourteen hundred prisoners and six pieces of cannon. These advantages made the total trophies of the battle of Gross Beeren four thousand prisoners, besides an equal number killed and wounded, and twenty-eight guns; while the Allies were not weakened by more than half the number. These results, considerable as they were, might have been greatly augmented, if Bernadotte had made a proper use of the superiority of force, and great preponderance in cavalry, which he enjoyed. But he was so cautious in his movements, that though he had no enemy to withstand him in the field, and the French fell back at all points, he took eleven days to advance from Gross Beeren to Rabenstein, near the Elbe, where he established his headquarters on the 4th September, though the distance was little more than fifty English miles.<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon was at Dresden when these disastrous tidings from Bohemia, Silesia, and Prussia arrived with stunning rapidity after each other. His whole projects for the campaign, which seemed to be opening in so auspicious a manner by the glorious victory of Dresden, were at once blasted. The moral effect of that great triumph was destroyed. The Allies, instead of regaining Prague in consternation, brought with them the trophies of Vandamme and a considerable part of his corps as prisoners. The battle of Culm had turned into cries of joy the desolation which began to be felt in the valleys of Bohemia; the army of Silesia was flying in disorder before its terrible antagonists, and loudly demanding the Emperor and his Guards as the only means of stemming the torrent; the attack on Berlin had failed. Instead of electrifying Europe by the capture of the Prussian capital, the northern army was thrown back to the Elbe, while the Prussian landwehr was singing the pæans of victory, and unheard-of enthusiasm animated the whole north of Germany. Napoleon was strongly affected by these reverses, the more so as they were quite unexpected; and he immediately began, as usual, to lay the whole

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Aug. 26.

Sept. 4.  
1 Bout. 57.  
59. Jom. iv.  
408. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
109, 101.  
Vaud. i. 168,  
170. Plotho,  
ii. 154, 155.  
Richter, i.  
426, 428.

76.

Vast effect of  
these suc-  
cesses of the  
Allies.

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blame upon his lieutenants.\* Circumstances, however, were so pressing, and succours were demanded from so many quarters at once, that it was no easy matter to say to which direction the Emperor should turn with the anxiously expected relief. His first design was to reinforce the army of the north, and resume in person, and with the aid of his Guards, his favourite project of a march upon Berlin. But Macdonald's representations of the disastrous state of the army in Silesia were so urgent, and the advance of the enemy on that side was so threatening, that he at length determined, though much against his will, to direct his steps towards Bautzen and the banks of the Bober.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii. 324, 325. St Cyr, iv. 130, 131.

77.  
Defensive  
measures of  
Napoleon for  
the protec-  
tion of  
Saxony.

In pursuance of this resolution, orders were immediately given to stop at all points the pursuit of the Allied columns into Bohemia; the broken remains of Vandamme's corps, intrusted to the care of Count Lobau, after being inspected at Dresden by the Emperor, were reconducted to the inhospitable summits of the mountains at Gieshübel and Peterswalde; St Cyr's corps was stationed between the latter point and Altenburg; while Victor occupied the passes and crest of the range from that to the right towards Reichenberg and Freiberg. The command of the army of the north was intrusted to Ney; the Emperor being with reason dissatisfied with Oudinot, for the senseless dispersion of his force which had led to the check at Gross Beeren, as well as for the eccentric direction of his retreat towards Wittenberg instead of Torgau.<sup>2</sup> That grave error had put in hazard the interior line of communication between the army of the north and the centre of operations at Dresden, and even exposed Macdonald's rear and supplies to the risk

<sup>2</sup> St Cyr, iv. 395. Jom. iv. 415. Fain, ii. 325.

\* "Mon cousin, le Duc de Tarente (Macdonald) s'est laissé pousser sur Görlitz. Il sera possible que je sois obligé de marcher sur Bautzen, demain ou après demain. Occupez, donc, promptement les positions défensives."—NAPOLEON to ST CYR, 1st September 1813; ST CYR, iv. 391.

"Mon cousin, écrivez au Prince de la Moskwa (Ney.) Nous venons de recevoir des nouvelles du Duc de Reggio, (Oudinot,) qui a jugé convenable de venir se mettre, à deux marches, audessus de Wittenberg. Le résultat de ce mouvement intempestif est, que le corps du Général Tauenzlein, et un fort parti des Cosaques, se sont partis du côté de Luckau et de Bautzen, et inquiètent les communications du Duc de Tarente. *Il est vraiment difficile d'avoir moins de tête que le Duc de Reggio.* Il n'a point su d'aborder l'ennemi; et il a eu l'art de faire donner un de ses corps séparément. S'il l'eut abordé fraîchement, il l'aurait partout culbuté."—NAPOLEON to BERTHIER, 2d September 1813; ST CYR, vi. 393; and JOMINI, iv. 417, 418. Note.

of being cut off, or disquieted by the clouds of light horse, which inundated the plains beyond the Elbe, from Bernadotte's left.

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To prevent this inconvenience, and keep up the communication between the armies of Ney and Macdonald, Marmont's corps was withdrawn from the pursuit of the Allied grand army, and transferred to Hoyerswerda, about thirty miles from the right bank of the Elbe, nearly midway between the two armies; while the Emperor himself, taking with him the guards and reserve cavalry, and calling to his standard Poniatowski's corps, which had hitherto lain inactive in observation at Zittau, proceeded with sixty thousand choice troops to reinforce the dejected remains of the army which had been shaken by the disasters of the Katzbach. Thus, after all the losses from the preceding defeats were taken into account, sixty thousand men were left under St Cyr, Victor, and Murat, to make head against the grand army of the Allies on the left of the Elbe; a hundred and twenty thousand, under the Emperor in person, were directed against Blucher in Silesia; seventy thousand, under Ney, were opposed to the army of Bernadotte; and eighteen thousand, under Marmont, were in observation, and kept up the communications on the right bank of the Elbe.<sup>1</sup>

78.  
Positions  
given to the  
French troops  
around  
Dresden.

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
325, 326.  
Napoleon to  
St Cyr, 3d  
Sept. 1813.  
St Cyr, iv.  
395. Jom.  
iv. 415, 416.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
562, 566.

The Emperor's own movement, as usual, was attended with the desired effect. On the 3d of September, he set out from Dresden in the evening, and slept that night at the chateau of Hartau, near Bischofswerda. The guards and cuirassiers of Latour Maubourg made a magnificent appearance as they defiled along the road. The departure of the Emperor was accelerated by the intelligence received that day, of the capture of a considerable convoy of ammunition between Bautzen and Bischofswerda, by the Cossacks from Bernadotte's army. Marmont was pushed forward in that direction, to prevent a repetition of the insult, and finally took post at Hoyerswerda. On the following morning, Napoleon set out by break of day, and early in the forenoon came in contact with the advanced guard of Blucher, which was strongly posted on the high grounds of Stromberg and Vohlaerberg, beyond Hochkirch, on the road to Görlitz. The Prussian generals soon perceived, from the increased activity in the French

79.  
Napoleon  
advances  
against  
Blucher.

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army, and the splendid array of troops which crowded the roads coming from Dresden, that the Emperor was before them; and Blucher, faithful to the instructions he had received, and the general system agreed on at Trachenberg, immediately fell back. The French, continuing to advance, soon reoccupied Görlitz; while Blucher's retiring columns repassed successively both the Queis and the Neisse. Napoleon slept on the night of the 5th in the parsonage manse of the parish of Hochkirch; and on the following morning resumed his march in pursuit of the Allied troops, hoping that the impetuous character of the Prussian marshal, flushed with his recent victory, would lead him to halt and give battle. Blucher, however, still continued to retreat; and at noon, the Emperor, altogether exhausted with fatigue, entered a deserted farm-house by the wayside, where he threw himself on some straw in a shed, and mused long and profoundly on the probable issue of a contest, in which the Allies never gave him an opportunity of striking a blow in person, and the armies of his lieutenants, when left to themselves, hardly ever failed to be involved in disaster. At the close of his reverie he started up, and ordered the guards and cuirassiers to return to Dresden, leaving Marmont in such a situation at Hoyerswerda, as to be able to give assistance, in case of need, either to Ney or Macdonald. His presence at the Saxon capital was much required; for already the Allies were beginning to resume the offensive on the frontier of Bohemia, and a terrible disaster had been incurred to the north of the Elbe.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
325, 326.  
Bout. 70, 71.  
Odel. i. 269.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
105, 106.  
Plotho, ii.  
162, 163.

80.  
Ney's move-  
ments against  
Bernadotte.

Ney, who had been appointed to replace Oudinot, in the command of the army of the north, had received the Emperor's instructions to march direct to Baireuth, where a corps was to be waiting him to bring reinforcements. He would there be only three days' march from Berlin; and so low did Napoleon still estimate the Prussian landwehr and light horse, that he persisted in assuring him, that if he would only keep his troops together, and put a good countenance on the matter, all that rabble would soon disperse, and he would find the road to the Prussian capital lie open before him.\* Ney, in pursuance of

\* "From Baireuth you will be only three days' march from Berlin. The communication with the Emperor will then be entirely established, and the

these instructions, and impelled not less by the ardour of his own disposition than the express command of Napoleon, immediately put himself in motion. He arrived at the headquarters of the army on the 4th of September, and found the whole troops arranged under shelter of the cannon of Wittenberg. This state of things sufficiently evinced the entire incapacity of Oudinot for separate command; for he had now altogether lost his communication with the central point of Dresden, and permitted the whole right bank of the Elbe, between that fortress and the Saxon capital, to be inundated by a deluge of Russian and Prussian light horse, who did incredible mischief to the communications and supplies of both armies. Having reviewed his troops, and encouraged them by the assurance of prompt succour from the Emperor, Ney immediately set out on the morning of the 5th, directing his march by Zahna and Saida, so as to regain the high-road from Torgau to Berlin, which was his proper line of communication with the headquarters at Dresden.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vaud. i.  
170. Bout.  
60. Jom. iv.  
419. Richter,  
i. 434. Grosse  
Chron. i. 574,  
576.

On the evening of the same day the army was established on a line between these two villages, the Prussian advanced posts rapidly retiring before them. On the other hand, the Prince-Royal no sooner ascertained that the enemy were marching in strength against him, headed by his old comrade Marshal Ney, with whose determined character in the field he was well acquainted, than he took measures for concentrating his army. Setting out from Rabenstein, where his headquarters had been established, he marched across the country, so as to regain the great road between Torgau and Berlin. Tauenzeln, who formed the advanced guard of his army, reached DENNEWITZ early in the morning of the 6th, and soon found himself in front of the vanguard of the French army, which, in its march from Zahna and Saida, had approached that village on the route to Juterbock, where the great

81.  
Advances  
towards  
Dennewitz.  
Sept. 5.

Sept. 6.

attack on the Prussian capital may take place on the 9th or 10th instant. All that cloud of Cossacks and rabble of landwehr infantry, will fall back on all sides when your march is once decidedly taken. You will understand the necessity of moving rapidly, in order to take advantage of the present state of inefficiency of the Allied grand army in Bohemia, which might otherwise recommence operations the moment that they became aware of the departure of the Emperor."—*Instructions to NEY, 2d September 1813; ST CYR, iv. 394.*

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<sup>1</sup> Vaud. i.  
171. Bout.  
61, 62. Jom.  
iv. 419, 420.  
Richter, i.  
437.

road from Torgau would be regained. Tauenzlein immediately drew up his troops in order of battle, and unmasked a powerful battery, the fire of which arrested the progress of the Italian troops under Count Bertrand. The French general, however, was not disconcerted, but bringing up his remaining divisions, re-established the combat; his artillery, posted on higher ground, played with advantage upon that of the Allies, and Morand advancing with his division, which was composed in great part of veterans, sensibly gained ground, and threatened the left wing of the Allies, which had first come into action, with total defeat.<sup>1</sup>

82.  
Battle of  
Dennewitz.  
Sept. 6.

Succour, however, was at hand; for Bulow, who commanded the Allied centre, which was marching up immediately after their left wing and in the same direction, no sooner heard the cannonade on the side of Dennewitz, than he hastened his march, and arrived with twenty thousand Prussians, whom he deployed with the corps under Hesse Homburg in reserve; and not contented with remaining in position, he immediately directed the troops by an oblique advance against the flank of Bertrand's corps, which was now pushing Tauenzlein before it, in front of Dennewitz. The Prussians advanced in échelon by the left, but before they could reach the enemy, Reynier, with the Saxons, had come up to the support of Bertrand, and a combat of the most obstinate description ensued; the French centre and left presenting a front on the two sides of an oblique triangle to the enemy, and the Prussians assailing them on both its faces. After four hours' hard fighting, however, the enthusiasm of the Prussians prevailed over the intrepidity of the Saxons. The village of Niedergorsdorf and Göhlsdorf were successively carried, and the French centre and left driven back in the direction of Oehna.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vaud. i.  
172. Vict.  
et Cong. xxii.  
103. Bout.  
62. Jom. iv.  
420, 421.  
Sachsen und  
Seine  
Krieger, 173.

83.  
Arrival of  
Ney with his  
centre on the  
eld.

Ney, however, now came up in haste with Oudinot's corps, which was stationed to the left of the Saxons, and immediately in front of Bulow's right. The arrival of this fresh corps, fully twenty thousand strong, made an immediate change upon the field of battle. The two corps uniting, turned fiercely on their pursuers, and being superior in numbers, not only regained Göhlsdorf, but drove the Prussians entirely across the road to the high grounds.



near Wilmersdorf, from which Bulow had originally come. That general upon this brought forward his reserve; the Saxons, though they combated bravely, were forced in their turn to retreat; and Gohlsdorf, the object of such fierce contention, a second time fell into the hands of the Prussians. Oudinot then again advanced the division of Pachtod, and it in the first instance gained ground upon the enemy, and restored the combat. It was hard to say to which side ultimate success would incline, when, at this critical moment, the Prussian brigade of Borstel, which was marching in the rear across the country towards Jüterbogk, informed, near Dalichow, of the critical state of matters on the Allied right, appeared on the field, and immediately attacked, with loud cheers, the extreme left of Oudinot in flank. At the same time, the Prussians under Thumen, who had combated behind Dennewitz ever since the morning, resuming the offensive, vigorously attacked and carried that village, and drove back Bertrand's corps, who were excessively fatigued with their long march and subsequent combat, to a considerable distance. The effect of this double advantage occurring at the same time, was decisive. Ney, finding both his wings driven back, and his centre in danger of being enveloped by the enemy, gave orders for a retreat at all points. This retrograde movement, however, was conducted with great regularity; the French braved, without shrinking, the destructive fire of grape-shot from the enemy's numerous batteries, which were now hurried to the front; and several charges of the Prussian horse were repulsed by the rolling fire and steady conduct of their retiring columns.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
421. Bout.  
62, 63. Vaud.  
i. 172. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
103. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
577, 579.

Hitherto the Prussian army, not in all above forty-five thousand combatants, had singly maintained the conflict, with heroic resolution, against the French, who numbered seventy thousand sabres and bayonets. The Swedes and Russians, composing nearly a half of the army, had not yet come into action, having composed the right of the column of march, which was advancing with the left in front. But Bernadotte, with this powerful reserve, having broken up in the morning from Lobbesee and Eckmannsdorf, had now reached Kaltenborn, a league in rear of Dennewitz, where the battle was raging,

84.  
Arrival of  
Bernadotte  
with the Swe-  
dish reserve  
decides the  
victory.

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and, forming his whole force in order of battle, advanced rapidly to the support of the Prussians, now well-nigh exhausted by their long and arduous exertions. The appearance of this imposing mass on the field of battle, where Ney had no longer a reserve on his part to oppose to them, was decisive. Seventy battalions of Russians and Swedes, supported by ten thousand horse of the two nations, and preceded by a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, advanced in beautiful array of columns of attack, with sufficient space left between them for the front file to deploy, and form a continuous line. Ney, who had not been able to succeed in his attack upon the Prussians alone, was in no condition to maintain his ground when this fresh and formidable body came upon him. Disorder and vacillation speedily became visible in his retreating columns; soon four thousand Russian and Swedish cavalry advanced at the gallop to support the points of the Prussian line, where the contest was most obstinately maintained; and the ranks were no longer kept, when Bulow's men, opening with admirable discipline, made room for the infantry of the reserve to advance, and the Russian cavalry, charging furiously through the apertures, swept like a torrent round the French retreating columns.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bernadotte's Official Account. Schoell, iii. 116. Bout. 64, 65. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 104, 105. Vaud. i. 172, 173. Richter, i. 443, 444.

85.  
Rout of the  
French.

The retreat soon turned into a flight. In vain Ney endeavoured to hold firm, with the Saxons in the centre, who were hitherto unbroken, near Rohrbeck; the troops there, too, were seized with a sudden panic on seeing their flanks turned by the Swedish and Russian horse, and, breaking into disorder, fled in confusion. The effects of this rout of the centre were in the highest degree disastrous; the enemy rushed into the huge gap thus formed in the middle of the line, and, vigorously pursuing the fugitives, separated the right from the left wing. In vain Arrighi brought forward his dragoons to cover the retreat; a thick cloud of dust enveloped the advancing squadrons of the pursuers, and rendered them more terrible from being unseen. Arrighi's men were shaken by the terrors by which they were surrounded, and wavered before reaching the enemy. Soon they were overwhelmed by the torrent, and drawn into its vortex before the Russian sabres were upon them. At length

the whole army presented nothing but a vast mass of fugitives. Ney did all that courage and coolness could suggest to arrest the disorder, but it was in vain: his utmost efforts could only preserve some degree of steadiness in the retiring cannoniers, who, by rapidly working their guns, prevented the total destruction of the centre; but the wings were irrevocably separated. Oudinot, with his own corps and a part of the Saxons, retreated to Schweinitz; while Ney himself, Bertrand, and the cavalry, got off to Dahme. On the day following, additional successes were gained by the Allies: Ney's rear-guard was attacked by the victorious Prussians, and defeated, with the loss of fifteen hundred prisoners; and during the night six hundred more were taken by their light horse, with eight pieces of cannon. It was not till the 8th that the French general succeeded in reuniting his shattered and divided columns, under cover of the cannon of Torgau.<sup>1</sup>

The loss of the French in the battle of Dennewitz was very severe. It amounted, in the battle and subsequent retreat to Torgau, to thirteen thousand men, of whom one-half were prisoners; with forty-three pieces of cannon, seventeen caissons, and three standards; besides six thousand stand of arms which the fugitives threw away to accelerate their flight. The Allies lost nearly six thousand men, of whom five thousand were Prussians; a clear proof upon whom the weight of the battle had fallen and with whom the glory of the victory should rest. But its moral consequences were far more important. The Prussian troops, of whom a large proportion were landwehr, had here defeated the French in a pitched battle, led by one of their most renowned chiefs: the stain of Jena was washed out: the days of Rossbach and the Great Frederick seemed about to return; and Berlin, no longer trembling for foreign occupation, might send forth her sons conquering and to conquer on the brightest fields of European fame.<sup>2</sup>

The French military historians, confounded at this defeat—which they could neither ascribe to the cold, as in Russia, nor to the force of overwhelming numbers, as on the second day at Culm, nor to flooded rivers, as at the Katzbach—have laboured to save the honour of their arms

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<sup>1</sup> Bernadotte's Official Account. Schoell, iii. 117. Bout. 64, 65. Jom. iv. 422, 423. Vaud. i. 173. Plotho, ii. 170, 172. Richter, i. 445-6.

<sup>86.</sup>  
Result of the battle.

<sup>2</sup> Bernadotte's Official Account. Schoell, Recueil, iii. 117. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 105. Bout. 66. Jom. iv. 424. Die Grosse Chron. i. 589. Plotho, ii. 174.

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87.

Reflections  
on the battle.  
Errors of  
Ney.

by ascribing it entirely to the incapacity of Marshal Ney; who had no head, they affirm, for previous combination, and never received any illumination of genius till the enemy's balls were whistling through the bayonets. Without ascribing the disaster entirely to this cause, it must be admitted that the conduct of the French Marshal on this occasion was not such as to support his great reputation. Like Oudinot at Gross Beeren, he was surprised by an attack on his line of march when little prepared for it, and under circumstances when such an event was not only probable but certain. When Ney took the command of the army under the cannon of Wittenberg, it was completely concentrated, and occupied a position of all others best adapted to act with effect on the army of the Allies, then occupying a line above twenty miles in length, from Rabenstein to Saida. Instead of this, he brought up his columns to the attack in so desultory a manner, that he was never able to take any advantage of the great superiority of force which he might have thrown upon any point of the enemy's line, and in the end had the whole hostile array on his hands, before he had been able to make any impression on the corps first engaged. In justice, however, to the French marshal, it must be observed, that he was on this occasion very indifferently aided by his lieutenants; and that Oudinot, in particular, stung to the quick by having been deprived of the command, by no means pressed forward into action with the alacrity which might have been expected from his character. This jealousy of the marshals of each other, already so long known and sorely experienced in the Peninsular war, had risen to such a height in Germany as to render all cordial co-operation impossible, except under the immediate eye and authority of the Emperor.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 68,  
69. Jom. iv.  
25.

88.  
Errors of  
Bernadotte.

Nor was the conduct of the Prince-Royal, though crowned with success, by any means beyond the reach of reproach. Great as his victory was, it would have been much more decisive, if, instead of marching with his reserves on Echmansdorf and Wilmersdorf, that is, in the rear of the Prussian line of battle, at the distance of five miles, he had followed the march of Tauenzlein and Bulow by the great road direct on Dennewitz, which would have

brought an overwhelming force on the flank of the French at the crisis of the battle, just as Ney did to the Allies at Bautzen, and Blucher to Napoleon at Waterloo. Still more, his pursuit was languid and inefficient; he made no sufficient use of the unparalleled advantage of having utterly routed the enemy's centre, and separated their two wings from each other: his noble cavalry were not, on the day after the battle, thrown with sufficient vigour on the traces of the flying foe; and an army which had been routed on the field, in a way hardly to be equalled in modern war, was allowed to retire with scarcely any molestation to the Elbe, and reunite its dissevered wings at Torgau, while the victor remained inactive at Jüterbock, only a few miles from the field of battle.<sup>1</sup>

But if the conduct of Bernadotte, both at Dennewitz and Gross Beeren, was open to serious reproach, and indicated not obscurely a wish to spare the native troops of Sweden, and not even to push the advantages gained by the Prussians to the utmost, the vigour, resolution, and capacity evinced by the Prussian generals, especially Bulow and Borstel, in bearing up with inferior means for half the day, against superior forces on the part of the enemy, were most conspicuous. In particular, the perfect unanimity and concord with which they supported each other on every trying occasion, and the true military instinct which led them, at once and without orders, to hasten where the cannon was loudest and the danger greatest, were beyond all praise; and, seconded by the devotion and valour of their brave though inexperienced followers, mainly contributed to the victory on both these glorious days. Never, in truth, was a more animated spectacle witnessed than the Prussian army exhibited at that period. Jealousies there were none in that noble array: individual interests, separate desires, were forgotten; old established feuds were healed; recent rivalries were suppressed; one only feeling, the love of country, throbbed in every heart; one only passion, the desire to save it, gave strength to every hand.<sup>2</sup>

The repeated defeats which he had thus experienced in every quarter, and under circumstances where the faults of generalship appeared to be pretty equally divided between the contending parties, at length brought home

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
424, 425.  
Bout. 68, 69.  
Richter, i.  
438, 410.

89.  
Admirable  
conduct of  
the Prussian  
generals and  
soldiers.

<sup>2</sup> Bout. 69,  
70. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
589, 595.

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90.

These defeats  
destroy the  
charm of  
French invin-  
cibility.

to Napoleon the painful conviction, that neither his own troops nor those of his opponents were what they once had been. However much the adulation of his military courtiers might at the time, or the fond partiality of his subsequent panegyrists may still, be inclined to ascribe these misfortunes to errors of conduct on the part of the generals at the head of the movements, or to inconceivable fatality, their reiterated occurrence, under every variety of command, officers, and troops engaged, was sufficient to demonstrate to all unprejudiced observers, that the long established superiority of the revolutionary troops was at an end. In presence of the Emperor, indeed, and with the consciousness that his redoubtable Guards and cuirassiers were at hand to arrest any disorder, the conscripts evinced extraordinary enthusiasm, and still performed heroic actions. It was the able use which he made of that formidable reserve of fifty thousand chosen veterans, in battles where he commanded in person, which so long arrested the tide of disaster. But where this great cause of enthusiasm and tower of strength was wanting, the usual appearances of a sinking cause had become visible.

91.

Especially  
where the  
marshals  
commanded  
and not Na-  
poleon.

The marshals wanted vigour, and had become either timid and over circumspect, or were unduly rash and overweening in their movements. The troops generally went into battle with courage, but they failed to sustain it with constancy; and on the first appearance of a reverse took to flight by whole battalions, or laid down their arms, like the Austrians in the beginning of the war, in large bodies. Thirty thousand prisoners and two hundred guns had been taken by the Allies in pitched battles, within three weeks after the resumption of hostilities; while the Russians retreated from the Niemen to Moscow, a distance of six hundred miles, in presence of four hundred thousand men in close pursuit, without one battalion being broken or one standard taken. A change, therefore, had plainly come over the spirit of the contest; the old enthusiasm of the Revolution was worn out, the military array of the empire had broken down: while its oppression had roused an indomitable spirit of resistance on the other side, and its antagonists had learned, in combating, to conquer it. The effects of this truth being perceived, were in the highest degree important. Napo-

leon lost confidence in his troops and his fortune, and no longer attempted those daring strokes which had so often in former campaigns secured him success; while his marshals evinced that dread of responsibility, and nervousness about consequences, which are the invariable attendants, save among those whom a sense of duty supports, of the secret anticipation of disaster.

While these events were taking place in the northern line of operations, the Allied grand army had resumed the offensive on the Bohemian frontier. No sooner was Schwartzenberg made aware, by the cessation of the pursuit of his columns, that Napoleon had set out in a different direction, than he put his troops in motion, again to threaten the Saxon capital. On the 5th September Wittgenstein crossed the mountains with the right wing, and pushed his advanced guard to Nollendorf, and on the following day he reached Gieshübel; while Ziethen occupied Grosse Coota, and Count Pahlen and Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, who had crossed by Heppersdorf, took possession of Nentmansdorf. On the day following, Wittgenstein, continuing his march, occupied Pirna, and his advanced posts again appeared in the environs of Dresden; Schwartzenberg himself, with his heavily laden Austrians, also approached the mountains in the rear of the Russians, and on the 8th reached Aussig, near Töplitz. At the same time certain intelligence was received that Benningsen, with the Russian reserve, full sixty thousand strong, was advancing by rapid strides from the Oder, and might be expected on the Elbe before the end of September. This information was accompanied by the opinion from St Cyr, that "the system of the enemy is to hazard nothing on the points where the Emperor is ascertained to be with the troops which he always brings along with him. It may be presumed, therefore, that he will undertake no operation against Dresden so long as his majesty, with his Guards, is known to be in the neighbourhood of that town; but that he will march against it as soon as they are withdrawn, the great bulk of his force being concentrated within one march of Dresden, on the passes of Altenburg, Fürstenwalde, and Peterswalde."<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon had no sooner received this intelligence than

92.  
Second advance of the Allies towards Dresden.

Sept. 5.

Sept. 6.

Sept. 7.

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 71, 72. Vict. et Cong. xxii. 106, 107. St Cyr to Napoleon, 3, 4, 5, and Sept. 7, 1813. St Cyr, iv. 397, 405. Plötho, ii. 177, 178.

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93.

Napoleon  
resumes the  
offensive in  
Bohemia  
with the  
Guards.  
Sept. 7.

he took measures for the concentration of his troops on the side of Silesia, by ordering Macdonald to retire to Bautzen, near which Poniatowski was placed, so as to form his right, while he himself, with the Guards, set out in the direction of Pirna; Marmont was drawn back with his corps to Dresden, and a division, ten thousand strong, was stationed at Leipsic under Margaron. The repeated checks he had received made him feel the necessity of contracting his circle of operations, and stationing his generals at such distances from the central Saxon capital, that in a day or two he might be able, with his Guards and reserve, to carry succour to any quarter where their assistance might be required. Meanwhile the Russian army, in great strength, was concentrating in the environs of Culm and Töplitz, while the Austrians were coming up behind them, though still at a considerable distance, from the side of Prague. The Emperor felt strongly the necessity of delivering some decisive blow, to extricate himself from his difficulties; and immediately after he joined Marshal St Cyr, in the neighbourhood of Pirna, on the evening of the 7th, he had a long conversation with that able general, in the course of which he admitted, that "he had lost a brilliant opportunity of striking such a blow, by halting the Young Guard at Pirna when Vandamme was advancing to Culm;" but still inclined to the opinion that it should now be directed against Blucher or Bernadotte, and insisted that the grand Allied army would attempt nothing during his absence. Impressed with these ideas, which St Cyr in vain combated with military frankness, he returned to Dresden the same night, meditating a great blow against Bernadotte, and consequent triumphal entry into Berlin. But early next morning he was roused from his dream of security, and recalled to the advanced posts on the side of Pirna by the sound of cannon, which announced a formidable attack by the Russian vanguard in that quarter.

Quick as lightning, Napoleon moved up his Guards and cuirassiers to the scene of action, and after reconnoitring the enemy's columns from the heights of Gahrnig, determined that, although the great body of his reserves had not yet come up, it was advisable not to delay the attack,

Sept. 8.

<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
140, 143.

Bout. 72.

Vaud. i. 176.

Die Grosse

Chron. i.

627, 630.

Richter, ii.

87, 99.



as by the next day the plateau which the enemy occupied would be so strongly supported by artillery as to be altogether unassailable. He, accordingly, forthwith put his troops in motion, and, aiming his movement against the left of the Allied advanced guard, he directed the weight of his forces towards Liebstadt, whereby he threatened their communications with Töplitz. To avoid that danger, Wittgenstein immediately withdrew his men, and joined Kleist at Nollendorf; while at the same time Klenau's Austrians, who had been pushed on towards Chemnitz, retired to Marienberg. The arrival of Napoleon was felt like a shock along the whole line of the Bohemian hills. Satisfied with this advantage, Napoleon retired to his quarters at Dahme, where he received from Ney's aide-de-camp the whole details of the disaster at Dennewitz. The Emperor interrogated him closely as to all the particulars, and explained in the most lucid manner the causes of the reverse to the generals present, without giving vent to any ill-humour whatever against his lieutenant, but ascribing it all to the difficulties of the military art, which, he said, were far from being generally understood.\* He had just received the account of one of

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94.

He forces  
back the Rus-  
sian centre.

\* Napoleon's conversation on this occasion, which is reported by St Cyr, who was present, was very remarkable:—"The Emperor interrogated the officer minutely, and entered with the most imperturbable *sang-froid* into the movements of the different corps; after which he explained, in a manner equally lucid and satisfactory, the causes of the reverse, but without the slightest expression of ill-humour, or any manifestation of displeasure at Ney, or any of the generals engaged. He ascribed the whole to the difficulties of the art, which, he said, were far from being generally known. He added that, one day or other, if he had time, he would write a book on the subject, in which he would demonstrate its principles in a manner so precise that they should be within the reach of all military men, and enable them to learn the art of war as they learn any other science. I (St Cyr) replied, that it were much to be wished that the experience of such a man should not be lost to France, but that I had always doubted whether it were practicable to form such a work, though, if any one could do so, it was himself; that it seemed extremely doubtful whether the longest experience or practice was the best school for learning the art of a commander; that of all the generals, whether on our own side or that of our enemies, whom we had seen at the head of the armies of Europe, in all the long wars which the French Revolution had occasioned, none appeared to have gained by experience; and that I did not make any exception in his own case, as I had always considered his first campaign in Italy as his *chef-d'œuvre* in war. He said I was right, and that, considering the limited force he then had at his disposal, he regarded it as his greatest campaign; that he knew but one general who had constantly gained by experience, and that was Turenne—whose great talents were the result of profound study, and who had approached nearest to the end which he proposed to demonstrate, if one day he had time to compose the work which he had mentioned. That conversation was brought on by the recital of one of the greatest disasters of the campaign—a disaster attended with terrible effects to the interests of many, and of none so much as himself. He spoke of it, nevertheless, as calmly as he would have done of the affairs of China, or of Europe in the preceding century."—St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 149, 150.

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<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
149, 150.  
Bout. 73, 74.

the greatest disasters of the campaign, and which in the end was attended with the most ruinous effects to his fortunes; and he was not only calm enough to discuss the subject, as he would have done the wars of Scipio and Hannibal, but he had the magnanimity to exculpate entirely the general whose errors had had no small share in inducing it.<sup>1</sup>

95.  
Napoleon  
reaches the  
summit of the  
mountains.  
Aug. 10.

On the following morning at daybreak, St Cyr's corps pursued its march, and reached without opposition the village of Ebersdorf, on the Geyserberg—the highest point of the mountains between Saxony and Bohemia; and from the heights adjoining which the eye can discover a considerable expanse of the plains from Töplitz towards Prague. No sooner had the Emperor set foot on the frontier, than he despatched a messenger to the King of Saxony to announce that the enemy was thrown back into Bohemia, and then halted to gaze at the prospect which opened before him. Immediately at his feet descended the rapid slope of the Geyserberg, its sides, naked rocks or hanging woods, with the road, which was much cut up by the retreat of the Allied troops from Dresden, descending in zig-zag down the steep, till it was lost in the gulf at its feet. The artillery with extraordinary alacrity threw themselves into the hollow, and already the descent of the army had commenced, when the progress of the column was stopped by a carriage breaking down in a hollow part of the way; Drouot was sent forward to report on the passage, and he stated that it was impracticable till it was repaired. A few hours only, however, were required for that purpose, and Napoleon had himself shown, at the passages of the Landgravesberg, the evening before the battle of Jena,\* how quickly the most formidable obstacles of that description yield to the vigorous exertions of a skilful body of engineers.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Richter, ii.  
104. Odel, i.  
276. Pain, ii.  
331. St Cyr,  
iv. 157.  
Plotho, ii.  
192.

96.  
But declines  
to descend to  
Culm, or  
enter Bohe-  
mia.

St Cyr eagerly pointed to the plain at the foot of the mountain, where the Russian and Prussian army were to be seen in great masses, deploying, widening, and extending, as if in preparation for an immediate attack. From the rapidity of their movements, the confusion which prevailed, and the hurrying of officers to and fro, it was

\* *Ante*, Chap. xliii. § 41.

evident that they expected to be instantly assailed, for which they were little prepared, and that their leaders were in great anxiety for the result, as their situation and the nature of the ground in their rear would not admit of a retreat in presence of the enemy; while a huge column of smoke, the agreed on signal, rising from the elevated summits of the Millerschauer, the highest point of the range, told to the whole north of Bohemia that the dreaded invasion of the Franks had commenced. The Grand-duke Constantine's reserve of the guards were the first in position, next Wittgenstein's Russians, and Kleist's Prussians, formed in close array; but still there was no appearance of the Austrians; and St Cyr strongly urged the Emperor to hasten the attack, when his whole forces were at hand, and the Russians and Prussians, in a position from which they could not recede, stood alone exposed to his blows. Napoleon, who, from the elevated position which he occupied, beheld every rank, almost every man, in the hostile array, remained with the telescope at his eye, intently gazing on the enemy for above an hour; but at the end of that time he said, "I will not attack the enemy in that position—but cautiously conceal my intention: let the engineers continue to repair the road to-day and to-morrow; and suffer every one to rest in the belief that we are to have a great battle; if you are attacked on the mountain I will support you." So saying, he returned to Pirna much dejected at the failure of his designs, and the day after re-entered Dresden; having thereby lost the only opportunity which presented itself during the campaign, of engaging on favourable terms the Russians and Prussians when detached from the Austrians.<sup>1</sup>

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Sept. 11.  
1 St Cyr, iv.  
156, 158.  
Fain, ii. 332.  
Odel. i. 276,  
277. Grosse  
Chron. i. 635.  
Ploto, ii.  
193.

St Cyr's sinister presentiments were not long of being verified. No sooner were the Allies aware, by the cessation of the advance, that Napoleon was no longer on the summit of the Erzgebirge, than they again resumed at all points their offensive movement. Wittgenstein ascended directly towards Nollendorf; and two regiments of Russian hussars attacked, without waiting the arrival of the other troops, the French division of Dumonceau on the summit of the mountain, cut to pieces one battalion, made prisoners of another, and forced back the whole to

97.  
The Allies  
again attack  
St Cyr when  
the Emperor  
retires.

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Peterswalde, with the loss of above fifteen hundred men, which compelled St Cyr to draw back his whole corps to Gieshübel. Meanwhile Napoleon was busied with orders for the construction of a bridge over the Elbe at Pirna, and the formation of a great series of redoubts around it, to secure the passage of the army from one bank of the Elbe to the other; as also intrenchments on a large scale near Gieshübel, to bar the entrance from Bohemia in that quarter. Every thing announced a resolution to hold by the Elbe to the last extremity, and, without resuming the offensive to any considerable degree at any one point, to maintain that line as long as possible, and take advantage of any errors the enemy might commit in their operations on an immense circumference around it. During all this time, however, the troops, perched on the inhospitable summits of the Erzgebirge, were starving; the few villages which were to be met with in those elevated regions, devastated by the triple passage of armies over them, were entirely laid waste: so universal was the destruction, that it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by repairing a ruin, that quarters were got for the Emperor himself in the parish manse at Breitenau. The conscripts, stretched on the cold ground, had no protection against the frosty nights and frigid dews of autumn, nor was their satisfaction increased by beholding their adversaries comfortably encamped in the rich plains of Culm and Töplitz, and hearing the joyous sound of the *feux-de-joie* which announced the universal transports of the Allied troops at the victory of Dennewitz.<sup>1</sup>

No sooner was Napoleon informed that the Allies were again threatening St Cyr, and of the check experienced by Dumonceau, than he hastened, at the head of a powerful body of his guards and cuirassiers, to the frontier. Suddenly approaching Peterswalde, he fell unexpectedly with superior forces on a considerable body of the enemy's horse, which was defeated, and Colonel Blucher, son of the marshal, after a gallant resistance, made prisoner. On this occasion the Emperor altered his line of attack: it was against the enemy's right, and ascending the course of the Elbe, that his columns were directed; in consequence, he found the roads every where passable, and the enemy were without difficulty thrown back into

<sup>1</sup> Richter, ii. 104, 105.  
Odel. i. 277,  
279. Fain, ii. 333. St Cyr, iv. 167, 168.  
Lond. 136.  
Plotoh, ii. 196.

98.  
Napoleon again returns to the frontier and repels the enemy.  
Sept. 15.

Sept. 17.

the Bohemian plain. There, however, they stood firm, and took a position in the level, ready to give battle. The opportunity of striking a blow with advantage had been lost: great part of the Allied army were now assembled, above seventy thousand strong, in the plain at the foot of the mountains. Ziethen, with their advanced guard, occupied a wood at the base of the hill, Wittgenstein was in Culm, Colloredo on the heights of Striesewitz in its neighbourhood, and Kleist at Siberschen: the Russian and Prussian guards were in reserve between Culm and Töplitz.<sup>1</sup>

Every thing seemed to presage a decisive battle, and the soldiers in both armies expected it. Nevertheless, the crisis passed over with nothing more than some sharp affairs of advanced guards. In truth, the generals on both sides were desirous to avoid such an extremity: it was obviously for the interest of the Allies to postpone any general engagement till the arrival of Benningsen's reserve had added sixty thousand fresh troops to their arms; and Napoleon was desirous not to descend with the bulk of his forces into the Bohemian plain, both because retreat back again over the mountains, in case of disaster, was difficult, and because he still thought that it was on the side of Berlin or Silesia that the decisive blow was to be struck, or that some unguarded movement on the side of the Allied generals would soon enable him to deliver it with advantage. He had no fixed plan, but was on the look-out for his opportunity, and he saw clearly it was not to be found on the side of Bohemia.<sup>1\*</sup>

Desirous, however, not to depart for Dresden without having accomplished something worthy of his renown, and which might check the Allies from renewing their incursions during his absence, he ordered, on the afternoon of the 17th, a partial descent into the plain, and attack on the enemy's position. Ziethen, who held the post at the foot of the descent, was dislodged, and driven back towards Culm by Mouton Duvernet, and Arbesau

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Sept. 17.  
1 Bout. 77,  
78. St Cyr,  
iv. 169. 170.  
Fain, ii. 333.  
Better, i. 120,  
121. Grosse  
Chron. i. 641.

99.  
Views of the  
opposite  
generals at  
this period.

1 St Cyr, iv.  
173, 175.  
Vand. i. 179.  
Bout. 78, 79.  
Plötho, ii.  
206, 208.  
Better, i.  
128, 129.

100.  
Affair of Nol-  
lendorf, in  
which the  
French are  
worsted.

\* "Yesterday I made a reconnaissance to ascertain the force and position of the enemy; and although the debouch of Peterswalde was favourable for artillery, the declivities being gentle, the position of the enemy did not permit me to attack him. I have resolved, therefore, to hold to the system of *va et vient*, and to await my opportunity."—NAPOLEON to ST CYR, 18th September 1813; ST CYR, iv. 421.

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1813.

was carried. Napoleon himself, encouraged by the success of his advanced guard, descended to Dodnitz, at the foot of the declivity, where he eagerly reconnoitred the position and strength of the enemy. An obscure haze concealed the greater part of the hostile columns; even the chapel of Culm could not be discerned through the mist; when suddenly a terrible cannonade, loudly re-echoed from the neighbouring mountains, burst forth on the right and left: numerous batteries, placed on the heights on either side, concealed by the woods and fog, sent a storm of bullets down on the advancing columns; while the Russians in front resuming the offensive, with loud shouts returned to the charge. Napoleon quickly retired to the heights, but the column which had advanced into the plain did not escape without very serious loss. Coloredo turned their left, and regained Arbesau at the point of the bayonet; Meerfeldt, on the right, moved direct from Aussig on Nollendorf, so as to threaten their retreat, while Wittgenstein and Ziethen fiercely assailed their rear. A thick fog, which prematurely brought on the darkness of night, alone saved the whole division, which had descended into the plain, from total destruction; but as it was, they only regained the mountains with the loss of an eagle, three guns, and twelve hundred prisoners, besides an equal number killed and wounded.<sup>1</sup>

1 Plotho, ii.  
216. Vaud. i.  
179. Lond.  
138. Bont.  
78, 79. Odel.  
i. 282, 284.  
Fain, ii. 334.  
Grosse  
Chron. i. 644,  
645.

101.  
Napoleon  
marches  
again against  
Blucher.

Sept. 21.

Convinced by the view he had now obtained of the positions and strength of the enemy, that nothing was to be made of an attack on the side of Bohemia, and conceiving that the Allies were so situated and scattered, that they could not make any formidable attack on the French position on the mountains, at least for some days,\* Napoleon returned to Pirna, and from thence to Dresden. After a few hours' rest there, he continued his march with his guards and cuirassiers across the Elbe, to check the incursions of Blucher, who, taking advantage of the Emperor's absence, was now driving Macdonald before him, and had already occupied Bautzen and ex-

\* On the morning of the 18th, when the mist had cleared away, Napoleon ascended an eminence, and long gazed through his telescope at the columns of the enemy. "All that I can see," said he to Berthier, "forms perhaps two corps of 60,000 men—they will require more than one day before they can unite and attack. Let us return to Pirna."—FAIN, ii. 334.

tended himself along the line of the Spree. Napoleon arrived in front of the enemy, whose advanced posts were in the wood of Hartau. He immediately mounted on horseback, and a skirmish ensued, in the course of which the village of Goldbach became the prey of the flames. That night the Emperor slept at a miserable hamlet near Hartau, with only a part of his guards around him; the remainder, unable to bear up against the incessant fatigue of so many marches and countermarches which led to nothing, had fallen behind.<sup>1</sup>

The utmost melancholy prevailed at his headquarters. The campaign seemed endless; the troops, worn out by incessant fatigue and the severest privations, had lost much of their former spirit. Toils, sickness, and the sword of the enemy, had in an extraordinary degree thinned their ranks; and the generals could not conceal from themselves, that the French army, daily hemmed in within a more contracted circle, and diminishing in numbers, was no longer able to resume the offensive with a prospect of success at any point. On the following day, the Emperor seemed, what was most unusual to him, a prey to indecision. Blucher's army was drawn up in order of battle, but he did not venture to attack him; and after remaining under arms for the whole forenoon, he galloped at ten in the evening towards Neustadt, where a body of Austrians and Russians, under General Neipperg, was engaged in a skirmish with Lauriston, previous to their retiring into Bohemia. Next day, feeling himself too weak to resume the offensive in any direction, he returned to Dresden; and, being sensible of the necessity of contracting his circle of operations, withdrew Macdonald's army to Weissig, within two leagues of that capital, thereby in effect abandoning the whole right bank of the Elbe to the Allies. On the morning of that day there was a dreadful storm, accompanied with loud peals of thunder: an unusual circumstance so late in the season, and when the chill of winter was already felt; which, combined with the state of the Emperor's fortunes, was deemed by many ominous of his fall.<sup>2</sup>

While these indecisive but important operations were going on in Saxony and on the Bohemian frontier, a serious partisan warfare had sprung up in the rear of the

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Sept. 22.  
1 Fain, ii.  
336. Odel. i.  
287, 288.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 110, 111.  
Better, i. 128,  
129.

102.

Returns to  
Dresden  
without ef-  
fecting any  
thing.

Sept. 24.  
2 Odel. i. 287,  
289. Jom. iv.  
431. Fain, ii.  
335, 336.  
Bout. 83.

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103.

Partisan war-  
fare in the  
rear of the  
French.  
Sept. 10.

Sept. 11.

Sept. 18.

Sept. 24.

Sept. 26.

Sept. 28.

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 141,  
142. Bout.  
84, 85. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
112. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i. 605,  
612.

French army towards Leipsic and Westphalia. Secure in their mountain stronghold of Bohemia, the Allied sovereigns wisely resolved to take advantage of their great superiority in light horse, to threaten the French communications, and seize their convoys on the roads to the Rhine. With this view, Schwartzenberg advanced Kleinau's corps to Freiburg, where he made four hundred prisoners; from whence Thielman, with three thousand horse, was detached to scour the country towards Leipsic, while Mensdorf, with two thousand, beset the road from Dresden and Torgau towards that city. Thielman at first had considerable success. He attacked and destroyed, near Weissenfels, a large convoy of ammunition destined for the use of the Grand army; made prisoners five hundred men in Merseburg, and spread alarm through the whole of western Saxony. Lefebvre Desnouettes, however, now took the field with eight thousand *chasseurs à cheval* and cavalry of the Guard, and coming up with the Saxon partisan, near Merseburg, defeated him with considerable loss, and obliged him to retire towards Zwickau, after abandoning his prisoners. This check, however, had no other effect than that of calling forth Platoff, who issued from Bohemia with seven thousand Cossacks and Austrian horse, two days after, and directing his march to Altenburg, where Lefebvre Desnouettes lay, wholly unconscious of the impending danger, attacked him with such vigour, that he was quickly driven back to Zeitz. The French general, however, was effecting his retreat by échelon in good order, while still pressed by Platoff in rear, when he was attacked by Thielman, who had rallied after his check, and totally defeated with the loss of five guns and fifteen hundred prisoners; a blow the more sensibly felt, that it fell on some of the best corps of cavalry in the French army.<sup>1</sup>

104.

Commence-  
ment of the  
siege of Wit-  
tenberg.

Sept. 15.

Operations of a still more important character were undertaken at the same period by the army of the Prince-Royal in the north of Germany. Slowly advancing after his important victory at Dennewitz, Bernadotte at length moved his headquarters, a week after the battle, to Koswig, in the direction of the Elbe, and on the 15th he had got as far as Zerbst, while his vanguard was at Dessau on the Elbe. Bulow, meanwhile, laid siege to



Wittenberg. The operations were pushed forward with great vigour, and on the 24th the suburbs were carried ; under cover of a heavy bombardment, which set the town on fire in many different places, the second parallel was opened ; and every thing announced that, if not relieved, it could not hold out for any considerable time. Ney, who commanded now only two corps, not numbering above fifty thousand combatants, (Oudinot's corps having been dissolved, and its remains incorporated with the two others after the disaster of Dennewitz,) was in no condition to raise the siege ; and a movement which he made from Torgau, to clear the left bank of the Elbe of some of the Allied parties who had begun to infest it, had no other effect but to make them withdraw within the *tête-du-pont* at Dessau, which he did not feel himself in sufficient strength to attack.<sup>1</sup>

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Sept. 24.

1 Bout. 80,  
81. Vict. et  
Cong. xxii.  
109, 110.  
Ploto ii.  
173, 174.

Meanwhile Chernicheff, with more than his wonted boldness and address, carried the partisan warfare with the most signal success into the heart of Westphalia. Detached with three thousand horse from the army of the north, this indefatigable leader crossed the Elbe at Dessau, and pushing with great celerity across Germany, reached Cassel, the capital of the kingdom of Westphalia, in the end of September. Jerome, with the few troops which the necessities of the Emperor had left him for the defence of his capital, made a precipitate retreat without firing a shot ; and Chernicheff immediately made his entry into the city at the head of his Cossacks, amidst the vociferous applause of the people, and proclaimed the dissolution of the kingdom of Westphalia. Symptoms of insurrection against the French authorities were immediately manifested ; the students flocked in hundreds to be enrolled in battalions of volunteers ; crowds assembled in the streets loudly demanding arms, and the flame rapidly spread into all the villages in the neighbourhood. But the Russian commander, being destitute of infantry and artillery, was unable to maintain the advanced position which he had gained ; and, after remaining in the capital a week, he was obliged, by the approach of a considerable body of French troops, to evacuate it and retire across the Elbe. He regained the right bank of that river, however, as he had effected his advance, without losing a man, taking

105.  
Great success  
of Cherni-  
cheff in  
Westphalia.

Sept. 30.

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LXX X.  
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with him in triumph the stores of the arsenal, the royal horses and carriages, and an immense store of booty beneath the saddles of his Cossacks. But the moral effect of this blow far exceeded these predatory gains. The brother of Napoleon had been compelled to flee from his capital, and his dethronement pronounced and all but effected, by a foreign partisan; and a dangerous example had thus been given to the world of the facility with which these oppressive foreign thrones, destitute of all support in the interests or affections of the people, might be swept from the earth, the moment the military power which upheld them was overturned. The effect, accordingly, of this stroke was soon felt through the whole north of Germany: already a Saxon battalion had come over from the camp of Marshal Ney to that of the Prince-Royal; the remainder was only prevented by their personal regard for their sovereign, and the energetic appeals which he made to their military honour, from following the example; and more than one Westphalian battalion, after the surrender of Cassel, took the first opportunity of passing over from their fugitive monarch to the ranks of German freedom.<sup>1</sup>

Sept. 27.

1 Fain, ii.  
357, 359.  
Bout. 84, 85.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 113.  
Vaud. i. 182,  
183. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
589, 596.

106.  
Operations of  
Davoust and  
Walmoden  
on the Lower  
Elbe.

Aug. 19.

2 Bout. 85,  
87. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
113, 114.  
Vaud. i. 186,  
187. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
597, note.

Operations also of minor importance, but still of great local interest, had, during the same period, taken place on the Lower Elbe. The forces there were very nearly matched: Davoust having above thirty-five thousand men under his command at Hamburg, besides twelve thousand Danes, and Walmoden thirty-five thousand on the outside of its walls. Neither party, for some time after hostilities were resumed, made any considerable movements: but at length the French marshal issued forth on the right bank of the Elbe, and moved towards Berlin. Lauenburg was early attacked by a battalion of French infantry, and the partisan corps of Jutzon expelled. Walmoden, whose forces were injudiciously scattered, had not troops adequate at any one point to restrain the enemy; and the consequence was that he was compelled to fall back towards Grabow, leaving his right wing, composed of Swedes under Vegesack, seriously endangered. Davoust's instructions, however, were to await the result of Oudinot's advance at that period to Berlin;<sup>2</sup> and he remained, therefore, inactive at Schwerin, till the defeat of Gross Beeren having rendered

the projected combined movement against the Prussian capital impossible, he made the best of his way back to the Elbe. In doing so, the Danes under his command separated from the French, the former retiring to Lübeck, and the latter to the lines in front of Hamburg.

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1813.  
Aug. 30.

Though this sortie of the French from Hamburg was attended with no material results, and, by leading to the dislocation of the French and Danish forces, was rather hurtful than beneficial to their cause, yet it opened the eyes of the Allied generals to the necessity of strengthening the force which observed the enemy's operations in that quarter. With this view, twenty thousand of the landwehr of Mecklenburg and Swedish Pomerania were called out, who did good service, by rendering disposable a much larger portion of Walmoden's regular forces than he had hitherto been able to bring into the field. The beneficial effects of this arrangement were soon conspicuous. One of his light squadrons, which scoured the left bank of the Elbe, having intercepted a despatch from the French marshal to the governor of Magdeburg, in which he announced his intention of despatching the division Pecheux from Hamburg to reinforce the garrison of that fortress, which was threatened with a siege after the rout of Dennewitz, the Prussian general immediately took measures to intercept and destroy that force. For this purpose, leaving Vegesack, with the Swedes and landwehr of Mecklenburg, in the environs of Schwerin to observe Davoust, he himself set out with the flower of his army, sixteen thousand strong, for Dörnitz, where, with surprising celerity, he threw a bridge of boats across the Elbe, and, having crossed the river, came up with Pecheux, who had six thousand men and eight pieces of cannon, at the village of Görda, near Dannenberg. There

107.  
Walmoden  
destroys the  
French divi-  
sion Pecheux.

the French were speedily assailed by forces twice as numerous as their own, and totally defeated. The general and eighteen hundred men were made prisoners; the whole guns and caissons taken, and twelve hundred killed and wounded; while the Allies lost only eight hundred men. Having gained this brilliant success, Walmoden instantly recrossed the Elbe to oppose Davoust, who was greatly superior to the forces left to observe him;<sup>1</sup> and with such secrecy and skill were the operations con-

Sept. 16.

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
114, 115.  
Bout. 88, 89.  
Vaud. i. 187,  
188 Plotho,  
ii. 321, Varn-  
hagen Von  
Ense, 41.

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ducted, that he was back, like the Consul Nero in the war with Hannibal, before the enemy were aware of his absence.

108.  
Reasons  
which now  
compelled a  
change of the  
seat of war  
by Napoleon.

Matters had now arrived at such a pass with Napoleon, that a change of position, and an alteration of his line of action, had become indispensable. With equal judgment and ability, he had taken every possible advantage of the fortified line of the Elbe; and by means of the skilful use of his bridges over that river, and his interior line of communications, he had long, with inferior forces, maintained his ground in the heart of Germany. By so doing, he had preserved his ascendancy over the states of the Rhenish confederacy longer than in any other way could have been practicable, and kept at bay forces of the Allies, by which, under any other system of operations, he would in all probability ere this have been crushed. But the time had now arrived when this defensive system could no longer be maintained. Rich as the agricultural productions of Saxony are, they were by this time entirely consumed by the enormous multitudes of men and horses who had so long been quartered on its territory; and the contracted circle within which, on all sides, the French armies now stood, rendered it totally impossible for any further subsistence to be extracted from the soil; while the increasing audacity and strength of the Allied cavalry made any supplies from the rear to the last degree precarious.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
177. Odel. i.  
268. Tém.  
Ocul. ii. 196,  
197.

109.  
Deplorable  
condition of  
the French  
quarters.

Not only had all the towns and villages around Dresden been long ago exhausted by the triple scourge of quartering, pillage, and contributions, but the forage was every where totally consumed, the stack-yards emptied, the houses burnt or in ruins; while the fields of potatoes in the rural districts, in some cases ten times turned over in search of food, told to what shifts the countless swarms of troops of all nations, by whom they had been trodden, had been reduced.\* On the small town of Pirna, already reduced to despair by previous exactions, the crushing

\* "Not a vestige of forage was to be got for the horses. The frontier villages were all in ruins. All the houses not built of stone were torn to pieces for the fires of the bivouacs. All the environs bore the impress of the ravages of war. The earth in the fields, which had been ten times turned over, was again carefully searched for the few potatoes which might have escaped the eye of former plunder."—*Témoin Oculaire*, in ODELEBEN, ii. 278.

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burden of six thousand rations a-day was imposed in the end of September; while such were the necessities or cupidity of the soldiers, when quartered in the villages between it and Dresden, that not only were the wooden crosses, erected by the piety of former ages over the places of interment, torn up and burnt for firewood, but the graves themselves were opened. The coffins were broken and dragged up, the bones and corpses scattered about, the very shrouds and dead-clothes they contained, with the garlands of flowers found on once-loved hearts, seized by avaricious hands, and sold to the miscreants who followed the army to profit by its excesses.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Témoin  
Oculaire, ii.  
196, 197.  
Odel. i. 268,  
269, 278.  
St Cyr, iv.  
177, 178.

Deplorable as was the condition of the troops in the environs of Dresden, from the total ruin of the country, and the excessive privations to which they were exposed, their lot was enviable compared to that of a great part of the soldiers who were accumulated in the towns. The latter had warmth and lodging, indeed, but they were often dearly purchased amidst the accumulated horrors of famine, contagion, and mortality. The immense number of wounded who had been brought into the hospitals of that city since the campaign recommenced, had not only filled all the public establishments, but a great number of private houses, with the sick and the maimed; and although death had fearfully thinned their ranks, often at the rate of two hundred a-day, yet fifteen thousand were still heaped together in such a state of misery as to engender the never-failing accompaniment of human wo, a typhus fever of the most malignant kind. In this state of wretchedness they were when the general retreat of the army from Silesia and the Bohemian frontier, in the end of September, suddenly filled the city with thirty thousand fresh troops, besides twice as many quartered in the environs, upwards of two-thirds of whom were in a state of the most deplorable destitution. The accumulation of men and horses in a narrow space, and consequent spread of contagion, were then prodigiously augmented. In vain the most severe orders were issued by the Emperor — one in particular, that every tenth marauder should be shot<sup>2</sup> — to arrest the progress of disbanding and wandering on the part of the troops; the necessities of their situation, the confusion which pre-

110.  
Deplorable  
condition of  
the French  
in Dresden,  
Torgau, and  
the fortresses  
of the Elbe.

<sup>2</sup> Orders of  
Sept. 5.

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ailed, the thirst for gain and enjoyment, with the continual prospect of death before their eyes, rendered the men utterly indifferent to all such precautions.\* The distribution of rations of meat had become rare, those of bread were reduced a half; and nearly the whole army, with the exception of the Guards, were compelled to forage individually for their own subsistence. This system, which did admirably well as long as the French armies were continually advancing in the career of victory, to hitherto untouched fields of plunder, told against them with crushing but well-deserved severity, now that they were thrown back by defeat upon the exhausted theatre of former devastation. It was the counterpart of the compulsory retreat by the wasted line of the Smolensko road.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. ii.  
196, 197.  
Témoin  
Oculaire.  
Ploto, ii.  
216.

111.

Dreadful ef-  
fects of these  
circum-  
stances in the  
French army.

Often a hundred men were crowded together in huts intended only for a single family, and that of the humblest rank; men and horses, soldiers and marauders, camp-followers and prostitutes, were shut up together, half famished, and eagerly snatching from each other the plunder which they had wrenched from the miserable inhabitants. Even the hospitals of the insane had been seized on for lodging, and the lunatics turned out without the slightest means of subsistence, in pursuance of Napoleon's inhuman order, "to turn out the mad."<sup>†</sup> The wonted spirit of the soldiers was entirely broken by the sombre aspect and protracted fatigues of the campaign, and, above all, by the exhausting marches and counter-marches which came to no result. Their discontent broke out in open murmurs, and their despondency exhaled in

\* "The recent movements of the Grand Army had entirely exhausted the last resources of the country; and the soldier, having no longer the excitement of combat to distract his misery, felt it the more keenly. To all verbal complaints on this head, the answer always was, 'Cause the commissary to be shot, and you will want for nothing.' To the written reclamations an invitation was given to apply for orders or decorations, these being more easy to supply than bread. At this moment, the Emperor sent a decree by which the town of Pirna, at that moment at the lowest point of misery itself, should furnish us with six thousand rations of bread a-day."—*ST CYR*, iv. 178.

† "Depuis plusieurs mois il y avait à Sonnenstein, près de Pirna, une maison de santé pour les insensés. Le 14<sup>me</sup> Sept. elle fut tout à coup évacuée et convertie en une forteresse. Le directeur de l'établissement obtenait pour toute réponse du chef suprême, 'Qu'on chasse les fous.' Le major chargé de prendre possession du château, rendit encore plus dure, par la rigueur des mesures qu'il prit, l'exécution de cet acte de violence."—*ODELEBEN, Témoin Oculaire*, ii. 200.

bitter and graphic terms in their correspondence with their relations in France, great part of which was taken by the partisan corps in the rear, and fell into the hands of the Allies.\* It may be conceived how the bonds of discipline were relaxed, how the progress of contagion was accelerated, among multitudes thus cooped up together, under circumstances of such physical privation and mental depression. The diminution experienced in the effective force of the French army from these causes, was far greater than that occasioned by capture, or the sword of the enemy. From official documents it appears, that the total number of military inmates who were quartered on the inhabitants of Dresden and its suburbs, from the 15th June to the 15th November in this year, amounted to the enormous, and, if not proved by authentic evidence, incredible number of five million sixty-two thousand eight hundred and seventy-one persons,† a result which can only be explained by recollecting how frequently armies of a hundred thousand men, with their followers, passed through its gates during that disastrous period. And, from equally certain evidence, it is proved that the military force at the disposal of Napoleon, which, when the armistice was broken, amounted to nearly three hundred and sixty thousand men present with the eagles, had, by the end of September, a period of only six weeks, sunk down to less than two hundred thousand combatants.<sup>1</sup> ‡

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse Chron. i. 644, 645. Odel. ii. 196, 197. Lond. 140.

On the other hand, the condition of the Allies, since the struggle commenced, had sensibly ameliorated. They had lost, indeed, by sickness, prisoners, and the sword, above eighty thousand men since hostilities were renewed; but this number, great as it was, would be nearly replaced by Benningsen's army, which was now advancing by rapid strides across Silesia, and which crossed the Elbe on

112.  
Comparatively comfortable condition of the Allied troops.

\* The following are a few of the extracts:—"Two years in succession of such torments exceed the limits of human strength." Another,—“I am worn out with this life; continually exposed to fatigue and danger, without any appearance of a termination.” A third.—“Louis is there, wounded and a prisoner: this, then, is the end of military honours; this is the issue of our prosperity.” A fourth,—“Such a one has been killed: if this continue, every one will be killed: such as survive one campaign will be cut down in the next.”—FAIN, ii. 374, 375.

† See App. A, Chap. lxxx., and ODELEBEN, *Témoin Oculaire*, 237.

‡ See App. B, Chap. lxxx., and LORD BURGHESHER'S *War in Germany*, 316. App. No. ii.

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the 25th, and reached Töplitz in the beginning of October. Their troops were incomparably more healthy than the French. With the exception of the advance to Dresden in the end of August, when the fatigue had been excessive, the soldiers had not been exposed to any considerable hardships. Comfortably hutted or lodged in Bohemia, the grand Allied army was able, by the advance of a few corps to a short distance on the frontier, to put the flower of the French troops in motion, and bring back Napoleon's Guards, in breathless haste, from the extremity of Silesia to the summit of the Erzgebirge. Their wants, purveyed for by the wealth of England in the immense circle of Germany in their rear, were amply supplied : rations were regularly served out to the men ; and the necessity of providing for their own wants, so fatal to military discipline and subordination, was almost unknown. The enthusiastic spirit and signal success of the troops preserved them from mental depression ; the sick and wounded were attended to in the rear, where contagion was not fostered by multitudes, and the kindly feelings of the peasantry alleviated the evils they had undergone : while the universal exhilaration and spirit which prevailed, served as a balm to the wounds of those who had been injured, and sent them back in an incredibly short time to the ranks of war.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 139,  
140. Bout. 88.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
646, 647.



## CHAPTER LXXXI.

## BATTLES OF LEIPSIC.

IF the military position of the two parties were alone considered, it would be hard to say in favour of which, at this period, the scales of fortune were likely to preponderate. The French, it is true, had lost a hundred and fifty thousand men since the termination of the armistice; they had been defeated in three pitched battles; and their troops, severely straitened in their quarters, had suffered grievously from privation and famine. But still their line of defence was unbroken. Six weeks' fighting on a scale of unprecedented magnitude, had not driven them from their stronghold in the centre of Germany; and of all the great fortresses which they held on the Elbe, not one had been wrested from their arms. Napoleon in person had never ceased to be victorious: a triumph worthy of being placed beside Austerlitz or Friedland had already graced his arms; the ample circle of his enemies never ventured to withstand the shock of his cuirassiers; and the losses of the Allies, though not so great as his own, had yet been so considerable as to reduce them for some weeks to a defensive system. Above all, he held a central position, and ruled with undivided and despotic authority; whereas they acted on an immense circumference, and were directed by independent cabinets and generals of different nations, whose mutual jealousies had already well-nigh broken up the alliance, and who could not be expected to work together if a disaster similar to that of Dresden should again befall their arms.

So many chances did these circumstances afford in favour of the French Emperor, that if this had been an

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1.  
General view  
of the French  
forces at this  
period.

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2.

And of the  
Allies.

ordinary war, it is more than probable that he would have extricated himself from all his difficulties ; and that another victory would, as at Wagram or Friedland, have reinstated his affairs, and again prostrated the whole continental states. His situation after Eylau or Aspern was seemingly more hopeless than now on the Elbe : and his prospects were then more unfavourable, for the family connexion with Austria rendered it more than probable, that means might be found by concessions, or facilities procured by disaster, to detach that power altogether from the alliance. But this was not an ordinary war, and a spirit was now abroad upon the earth which overruled the decisions of cabinets, and mastered the movements of generals. The unbounded enthusiasm and the profound exasperation of Germany formed an element of unexampled importance in the strife, and, like a mighty stream, swept all lesser obstacles before it. Governments could not restrain their people : willing or unwilling, they were compelled to join in the crusade for the deliverance of the Fatherland. This generous and noble spirit had penetrated into the recesses of courts, and subdued all selfish feelings—alike in the leaders of armies and the rulers of nations. It was felt equally in the cabinet and the cottage : it stilled the jealousies of sovereigns, and animated the courage of armies. This it was which held in indissoluble bonds the discordant elements of the Grand Alliance ; this it was which filled all the chasms in their ranks by gallant multitudes pressing forward to the strife. Nor were material resources awanting ; for the last reserve of Russia, nearly sixty thousand strong,\* under Benningsen, was approaching, and to it Napoleon had no corresponding force to oppose ; every sabre and bayonet at his disposal was already on the Elbe.

3.  
Plan of the  
Allies at this  
period.

The arrival of this great force at Töplitz, on the 1st October, where it was reviewed, and found to be in a very efficient state, with the addition of eight thousand Prussians to Kleist's corps, raised the Russian and Prussian armies in Bohemia, after all their losses, to eighty thousand effective men in the field, exclusive of the Austrians, who were full seventy thousand. This was the signal for the recommencement of great operations. The Allied

\* 57,329 men, of whom 12,886 were cavalry and Cossacks, and 198 guns.  
—PLOTTO ; BEILAGE, vii. 63, 69.

sovereigns were at first inclined to have gone into Schwartzberg's plan, which was to have called Blucher's army, as well as that of Benningsen, into Bohemia, and acted by one line, by Kommotau and Chemnitz, on Leipsic, so as to intercept altogether the communications of the French army, and compel them to fight their way through two hundred and thirty thousand men back to the Rhine. But this would have left on Bernadotte's hands a force which he could not attempt to resist, if the enemy chose to cross the Elbe with all his forces, and carry the war into the hitherto untouched fields of Prussia, whereby Berlin would inevitably be taken. In addition to this, difficulties almost insuperable were experienced when the proposal was mooted to place Blucher and the Silesian army under the immediate direction of the Austrian commander-in-chief. They had hitherto done very well at a distance, and when each obeyed the commands of his respective sovereign ; but it was very doubtful whether this harmony would continue if they were brought into immediate and personal collision. Little cordial co-operation could be expected from the hussar-like energy of the Prussian veteran and the methodical circumspection of the Austrian commander ; and Blucher himself, whose opinion, age, and great services were entitled to respect, had expressed his disinclination to any such arrangement. It was, therefore, resolved to descend with the grand army of Bohemia and Benningsen's corps alone into the plains of Leipsic ; and to unite Blucher's army to that of the Prince-Royal, which would form a mass of a hundred and fifty thousand men, capable, it was hoped, either of arresting any advance of the enemy in the direction of Berlin, or of co-operating in a general and decisive attack on his forces in the Saxon plains.<sup>1</sup>

The different corps of the Allies forthwith received orders in conformity to these views. Blucher, as usual, was the first in motion. Leaving the division of Prince Czorbatoff at Bautzen to cover Lusatia from the incursions of the garrison of Dresden, he marched with the remainder of his forces, about sixty-five thousand strong, towards the Elbe, and reached Elsterwerda, while the French corps there crossed at Meissen. To deceive the enemy, he caused Sacken's advanced guard to attack the

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
432, 433.  
Bout. 92.  
Lond. 142.  
Plotho, ii.  
237. Better,  
i. 147.

4.  
Movements  
of Blucher  
across the  
Elbe in con-  
formity with  
this plan of  
operations.  
Oct. 2.

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tête-du-pont at that place ; and, while their attention was forcibly drawn to that point, he himself marched rapidly by Herzberg and Jessen, and on the night of the 2d October reached the Elbe, at the mouth of the Schwartzel Elster. Bridges were thrown across with incredible expedition, and the operation was conducted with the most signal ability. Such was the activity of all concerned in conducting it, and the admirable arrangements made for its completion, that by six next morning half the army was across without experiencing the slightest opposition. Bertrand's corps, however, mustering eighteen thousand combatants, was strongly intrenched at Wartenburg, at a short distance from the river, and Blucher could not advance without forcing this position. He commenced the attack, accordingly, at eight o'clock with the troops which had effected the passage ; and after six hours' hard fighting, drove the enemy from their position, with the loss of six hundred prisoners and an equal number killed and wounded, though the loss of the Prussians, who were alone engaged, was hardly less considerable. On the following day, the remainder of the army effected its passage without opposition, and Blucher, moving forward, established his headquarters at Düben.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 93,  
94. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
118, 119.  
Jom. iv. 433.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
645, 646.

5.  
Movements  
of Bernadotte  
and Schwartz-  
zenberg.  
Oct. 4.  
Oct. 5

Oct. 6.

Oct. 1.

At the same time the Prince-Royal of Sweden crossed the Elbe without any resistance, the Russians at Ackow, the Swedes at Roslau, where headquarters were immediately established. His advanced posts were pushed forward, so as to enter into communication with Blucher from Düben ; and on the day following, Bulow and Tauenzien were also crossed over, leaving Thumen only, with fourteen thousand men, to continue the siege or blockade of Wittenberg. Ney, whose army was so reduced that he had under his immediate command only Reynier's corps, now not more than twelve thousand strong, was in no condition to make head against forces so considerable : he therefore evacuated Dessau, and retreated by Bitterfeld towards Leipsic, summoning Bertrand to join his standard. At the same time the grand Allied army began to defile by its left through the mountains, to penetrate into Saxony by the route of Sebastiansberg and Chemnitz. Colloredo remained at Töplitz to guard the magazines there, and Benningsen

continued in the same place, but for a few days only, to rest his soldiers after their long march across Germany. The reserve of that army, under Prince Labanoff, which had now entirely come up, presented striking marks of the prodigious efforts which Russia had made to recruit her forces. A great number of Tartars and Baschirs were to be found in its ranks, who had come from the Lake Baikal and the frontiers of China, and some of whom were armed with their primitive weapons of bows and arrows. On the 2d October, the advanced guard, under Klenau, reached Chemnitz, where it was attacked, at first with success, by Prince Poniatowski at the head of his gallant Poles. But the indefatigable Platoff appeared on the flank of the victors as they were pursuing their advantages, and compelled them to make a precipitate retreat to Mitweyda. Next day headquarters were advanced to Marienberg; a hundred thousand men had already entered the Saxon plains, while a hundred and thirty thousand had crossed the Elbe, under Blucher and Bernadotte, to encircle the French Emperor.<sup>1</sup>

While the vast armies of the Allies, acting upon an immense circle, and directed by consummate judgment, were thus drawing round the French army, and preparing to crush it in the position it had so long maintained on the banks of the Elbe, Napoleon, for the first time in his life, remained without any fixed plan, and watching merely the course of events to select his point of attack. When he first regained Dresden, after his last abortive expedition against Blucher, he said, "I will not go out again; I will wait." In effect, he rested on his oars for ten days, constantly expecting his enemies to commit some fault which would give him an opportunity of striking with effect. He summoned up Augereau with his newly-raised corps, about fifteen thousand strong, to Leipsic from Mayence, though it had barely completed its military formation. Meanwhile, however, the losses sustained by the partisan warfare in his rear, and the frightful progress of famine and disease in Dresden, Torgau, and the other fortresses on the Elbe, rendered it indispensable for the French army to move. The Emperor had no alternative but to do so, or see his forces melt away and sink to the last stage of weakness before his eyes without

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Oct. 4.

<sup>1</sup> Better, i.  
147. Plotho,  
ii. 237.  
Bout. 95,  
96. Jom. iv.  
433. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
119. Fain,  
ii. 363, 366.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
649, 650.

6.  
Napoleon's  
views at this  
period.

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<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
178, 185.

7.  
His admir-  
able views  
expressed to  
St Cyr.

firing a shot. The rapid march of Blücher to the Elbe ; the passage of that river by Bernadotte at Roslau ; the movements of the grand army towards Komotau and Chemnitz—all indicated a determination on the part of the Allies to hem him in on every side, and possibly renew on the banks of the Elbe the catastrophe of the Beresina. Napoleon felt his danger ; and calling St Cyr to his cabinet at midnight on the 6th October, he thus expressed himself upon the prospects of the campaign.

“ I am going to leave Dresden,” said he, “ and I will take Vandamme’s and your own corps with me. I am certainly about to engage in a decisive battle : if I gain it, I shall regret not having had my whole forces at my disposal to profit by it : if, on the other hand, I experience a reverse, you will be of no use to me in the battle ; and, shut up here, you will be lost without resource. Besides, what is Dresden now to me ? It can no longer be considered as the pivot of the army, which is unable to find subsistence in the exhausted country which surrounds it. As little can it be considered as a great depot ; for there remain in it only provisions for a few days : almost all the stores of ammunition are exhausted, and what little remains may be distributed among the soldiers. There are at Dresden twelve thousand sick and wounded ; but they will almost all die, being the remains of sixty thousand who have entered the hospitals since the opening of the campaign. When winter sets in, the Elbe no longer affords a position : being frozen, it can be passed at every point. I am about to take up another position, which is defensible at every point. I shall throw back my right as far as Erfurth, support my left by Magdeburg, and my centre by the heights forming the left bank of the Saale, which form a material bulwark, at all times capable of arresting an enemy. Magdeburg will become to me another Dresden : it is a noble fortress, which can be left as long as necessary to its own resources, without the risk of seeing it carried, as Dresden might have been during the three days that the Allies were before its suburbs, if they had been commanded by a man of capacity. Dresden can never be made a strong place without destroying the vast suburbs which at present constitute the chief part of that beautiful capital. In addition to this, it would

require to be re-stored with ammunition and provisions, and it is now impossible to introduce them. In fine, I wish to change my position. Dresden is too near Bohemia: no sooner have I left it, even upon the shortest expedition, than the enemy are before its walls; and I have not the means of preventing that by threatening their rear. By the more distant position which I propose to take, I will be in a situation to direct great strokes against them, and force them to a durable peace." St Cyr expressed his entire concurrence in these lucid and masterly opinions; and he was dismissed with the assurance that next morning he would receive the requisite formal order for the destruction of the blockhouses, palisades, and exterior fortifications of Dresden, and the evacuation of its stores upon Magdeburg.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
186, 188.

Early next morning Napoleon set out from Dresden, and had a conference with Murat at Meissen. But instead of then following out the plan he had formed, and transmitting the instructions he had promised to St Cyr, for the evacuation of the capital, he totally altered his views, transmitted orders to that general to hold it to the last extremity, and placed under his orders his own and the remains of Vandamme's corps, about thirty thousand sabres and bayonets, besides twelve thousand sick and wounded, who encumbered the hospitals. With the bulk of his forces the Emperor marched to the northward, with the intention of joining the army of Ney in the vicinity of Torgau, and resuming his favourite project of an attack on Berlin; not without the hope that he would succeed, with his army in a central position between Bernadotte and Blucher, in separating the one of these commanders from the other, and beating them both in succession. To cover his communications, and keep in check the grand Allied army, which was now fast issuing from Bohemia towards Leipsic, by Marienberg and Chemnitz, he detached Murat, with fifty thousand men, composed of the corps of Victor, Lauriston, and Poniatowski, to Freiberg, with instructions to retard the advance of the enemy as long as possible, and when he could no longer keep his ground, to retire towards Leipsic and the Upper Mulde.\* The

8.  
Napoleon  
alters his  
plan, sets out  
to join Ney,  
and leaves St  
Cyr at  
Dresden.  
Oct. 7.

\* Napoleon's instructions to Murat, which explained his views at this period, were in these terms:—"I have raised the siege of Wittenberg: I have separated

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
366, 367.  
Norvins,  
Recueil de  
1813; ii. 371,  
372. Jom.  
iv. 434.  
Odel. ii. 210,  
211.

Imperial Guard and cavalry, with Macdonald's and Marmont's corps, followed the standards of the Emperor, and, joined to the corps of Oudinot, Bertrand, and Reynier, under Ney, formed a mass of a hundred and twenty-five thousand men, with which he proposed to strike the redoubtable blows which he meditated in the direction of Berlin. The King of Saxony, with his family and court, left Dresden in the suite of the Emperor. It was a mournful sight when the long train of carriages, amidst the tears of the inhabitants, defiled through the streets, and the sovereign, leaving his beloved capital to the horrors of an inevitable siege, set out a suppliant or a captive in the ranks of war.<sup>1\*</sup>

9.  
Who is there  
surrounded  
by the  
enemy.

The rapid evacuation of the right bank of the Elbe, in pursuance of these orders for the concentration of the army, prevented the execution to the letter of the rigorous orders of Napoleon, which were "to carry off all the cattle, burn the woods, and destroy the fruit-trees." The officers intrusted with the execution of this inhuman order found various excuses for not obeying it, and, in general, had not time to execute instructions, which would have reduced a large part of Saxony, where they had been treated with so much hospitality, to a desert wilderness. The rapid approach of the Allied armies, who covered the whole right bank of the river, and were already descending from the Bohemian hills by Pirna and Sonnenstein, threw back the numerous swarm of stragglers whom the French had left behind them. Dresden was speedily invested on all sides, and numerous covered boats, laden with crowds of sick and wounded, in the last stage of weakness and contagion, were daily arriving within its walls. Nothing could be more revolting than the conduct of the

the corps of Sacken from that of Langeron and York: Augereau this evening will be at Lützen or Leipsic, and Arrighi has orders to join him, which will bring you a reinforcement of at least 30,000 men. One of two things will happen: either I will attack the enemy to-morrow and beat him, or, if he retires, I will burn the bridges over the Elbe. Then you will do what you can to preserve Leipsic, so as to give me time to beat the army of Silesia; but if you are obliged to quit Leipsic, you should direct your course to the Mulde: the bridges of Düben and Eilenburg are guarded. My intention is to pass over to the right bank of the Elbe, and to manœuvre between Magdeburg and Dresden, debouching by one of my four places on that river to surprise the enemy."—See JOMINI'S *Vie de Napoléon*, iv. 435, 436.

\* Napoleon's notes on the position of the French and the Allies, and the different plans which he had entertained for the conduct of the campaign at this critical juncture, are very curious and instructive.—See Appendix, A, Chap. lxxxi.; and NORVINS, *Recueil de 1813*, ii. 366.



French military to these miserable wretches, when there was no longer any prospect of their being serviceable in the campaign. A soldier, in the last stage of dysentery, was found lying by the roadside, almost buried in a dung-hill, and uttering the most piteous cries. One said in passing, "That is no business of ours;" another, "I have no orders on the subject." An officer passed by, and exclaimed—"He is not to be pitied—he is about to die."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tém. Ocul.  
ii. 212, 213.  
Odel. ii. 213.

As soon as Napoleon was informed of the passage of the Elbe by the Prince-Royal, he determined to interpose between his army and that of Silesia, and, if possible, crush one or other before any assistance could be obtained. With this view he pushed on at the head of a hundred and twenty-five thousand men. The French army being concentrated, had the fairest prospect of falling on the detached columns of Blucher's army, which were marching across from the Elbe, in the direction of Bernadotte's forces. Langeron and York alone were at the headquarters at Düben, Sacken being between Eilenburg and Torgau. So late was the Prussian general of receiving information of the approach of danger, that it was only by a sudden decision and immediate movement, that he extricated himself from his perilous situation. On the 9th he passed the Mulde, and by forced marches joined Bernadotte with all his forces, late on the evening of the 10th, at Zörbig. On the same day Napoleon established his headquarters at Düben, which Blucher had left the morning before. So near was Sacken being cut off, that in following the wake of Blucher towards Düben on the evening of the 9th, he found the town already occupied by the French advanced guard, and only got on by filing to his right, and making a detour by the village of Sokana, where he passed the night.<sup>2</sup>

10.  
Napoleon  
advances  
against  
Blucher, who  
joins Berna-  
dotte.

Oct. 9.

Oct. 10.  
<sup>2</sup> Bout. 97,  
98. Jom. iv.  
436, 437.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
120, 121.  
Fain, ii. 369,  
370. Plötho,  
ii. 253, 257.

The decisive crisis was now approaching: every moment was precious; the fate of Europe hung in the balance, suspended almost even; a feather would make it incline either way. Both parties adopted equally bold resolutions; and it was hard to say which would be first pierced to the heart in the desperate thrusts that were about to be exchanged. Each army had passed the other, and lay in great strength upon his

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11.  
The Allies  
march to the  
west and  
pass Napo-  
leon, who  
prepares to  
cross the  
Elbe and  
invade  
Prussia.  
Oct. 11.

opponent's communications; Blucher and Bernadotte at Zörbig were between Napoleon and the Rhine, while he at Düben was between them and the Elbe. Both thought that, by threatening their adversary's communications, they would draw him back or reduce him to the defensive, and both acted on this principle. On the 11th the Prince-Royal and Blucher, leaving Thumen before Wittenberg, and Tauenzien at Dessau, to guard the passage of the Elbe, instead of returning towards the Elbe, marched still further to the south-west, and established themselves at Halle and Rothenburg, directly between Napoleon and the Rhine, and in such a situation that they could open up a communication across the plain of Saxony with the grand army descending from Bohemia. Napoleon, on his part, pushed forward Reynier to Wittenberg, and Ney to Dessau. The former, with the aid of the garrison of the besieged fortress, speedily raised the siege of Wittenberg, and drove Thumen, who commanded the blockading force, before him towards Roslau; while Tauenzien, finding himself in no condition to make head against Ney at Dessau, fell back with considerable loss to the same place, and, after breaking down the bridge over the Elbe, continued his retreat by Zerbst, towards Potsdam and Berlin. Napoleon was highly elated with these advantages, and, seeing the road to that capital open before him, entertained more sanguine hopes than ever of carrying the war into the heart of the Prussian territory, rallying to his standard the besieged garrisons on the Oder, and establishing his winter quarters, supported by Torgau, Magdeburg, and Wittenberg, in the hitherto untouched fields of northern Germany.<sup>1\*</sup>

Although, however, Napoleon did not prosecute his projected movement upon Berlin, and even withdrew Reynier back to Wittenberg, yet his demonstrations against that capital had the effect of withdrawing Bernadotte from his true line of operations, and endangering

Oct. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 98,  
99. Napo-  
leon to St  
Cyr, Oct. 10,  
1813. Jom.  
iv. 436. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
120, 121.  
Vaud. i. 196,  
197. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
555, 659.

\* Napoleon at this period wrote to St Cyr:—"I have raised the siege of Wittenberg: the army of Silesia is in full retreat by the left bank; to-morrow I will compel it to receive battle, or abandon the bridges of Dessau and Wartenberg. I shall then probably pass over to the right bank with all my army; and it is by the right bank I will return to Dresden."—*NAPOLÉON to ST CYR, 11th October 1813; JOMINI, iv. 436.*

in the last degree the army of Silesia. On the 12th October, he detached himself from Blücher, recrossed the Saale, and moved back towards the Elbe as far as Köthen. The forces under his command, however, as Tauenzien was on the other side of that river, did not exceed fifty thousand combatants, with which he could never have hoped to stop Napoleon at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand; while the separation seriously endangered Blücher, whose communications were now entirely cut off, and who had lost a considerable part of his baggage by the operations of the French light horse on his rear. Bernadotte's true policy would have been to have continued united to Blücher, who had so gallantly made his way to him through many dangers across the Elbe. Their united force, a hundred and thirty thousand strong, might not only have bid defiance to Napoleon, but would have entirely cut him off from the Rhine, and rendered his retreat to France, or even Holland, impossible.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, however, the grand Allied army was not idle. Issuing from the defiles of the Bohemian mountains, Klenau, on the extreme left, pushed as far as Penig on the 6th, on the direct road to Leipsic, while Wittgenstein on the right reached Altenburg on the same day. At the same time, Murat marched from Freiberg to Orderau—a central position at the foot of the high mountains, well calculated at once to maintain his connexion with the garrison of Dresden, and keep in check the advancing columns. On the day following, Schwartzberg moved his headquarters, with the bulk of his army, to Chemnitz; and although Murat, Poniatowski, and Victor, exerted themselves to the utmost, and the Poles even regained Penig, and drove back Klenau to a considerable distance, yet the continued approach of the vast masses of the Allies on all the roads, turned all the positions which they took up, and compelled them to fall back towards Leipsic. It was impossible that fifty thousand men could maintain themselves against a hundred and twenty thousand. The Austrians, constantly pressing forward, gained ground in every quarter, and on the night of the 9th, their advanced guard,<sup>2</sup> under Prince Maurice of Lichtenstein

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12.

False movement of  
Bernadotte towards the  
Elbe.

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 150.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
121, 122.  
Vaud. i. 197,  
198. Plötho,  
ii, 239. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
660, 661.

13.

Advance of  
the grand  
Allied army  
towards  
Leipsic.  
Oct. 6.

Oct. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
660, 661.  
Plötho, ii.  
239. Bout.  
103, 104.  
Vaud. i.  
198, 199.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
123, 124.  
Odel. ii. 17,  
18.  
Oct. 8.  
Oct. 9.

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and Thielman, surprised Wetlau, between Naumburg and Weissenfels, and on the direct road from Leipsic to Mayence. This movement in advance, however, which, by destroying the French communications, would have been of the very highest importance if effected by a large body of the Allies, totally failed in its effect from the insufficiency of the means employed.

14.  
The Austrians fail in cutting off the French communications.  
Oct. 10.  
Oct. 12.

Augereau, who was hurrying up by forced marches to Leipsic, next morning attacked them with great vigour, and not only cleared the road, but defeated the Allied advanced guard with considerable loss. On the 12th, with fifteen thousand men, he entered Leipsic, where a considerable concentration of troops had already taken place. On the Allied right, Wittgenstein continued to advance, though not without experiencing considerable resistance, and after several severe combats with Murat's cavalry. The forward movement, however, of the Allied right, rendered the King of Naples' position at Orderau no longer tenable, and he was obliged to fall back along the course of the Tchoppa to Mitweyda. On all sides the Allied forces were approaching Leipsic, and already their advanced posts were within sight of that city. On the same day on which Augereau entered it, Giulay made himself master of Weissenfels, on the road to France from Leipsic, where he captured twelve hundred sick and wounded; and, two days afterwards, Schwartzenberg made a reconnoissance with the corps of Klenau and Wittgenstein, which led to a severe action between three thousand of Murat's horse and Pahlen's dragoons, which, after several gallant charges, terminated in the overthrow of the French by sixteen squadrons of Prussian cuirassiers.<sup>1</sup>

Oct. 14.  
1 Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
123, 125.  
Bout. 103,  
104. Vaud.  
i. 199, 200.  
Norvins,  
Recueil de  
1813, ii. 380.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
663, 667.  
Better, i.  
154, 155.

15.  
Desperate  
cavalry  
action  
between  
Pahlen and  
Murat.

The Russian cavalry on this occasion were overwhelmed by the great superiority of the enemy, and would have been destroyed had it not been for the brilliant charge of the Prussian cuirassiers, who threw themselves upon the enemy, in the midst of their triumph, with the most determined courage. When Colonel Boutourlin, Alexander's aide-de-camp, expressed to an officer engaged in it the high admiration which he felt at witnessing their gallant bearing, the brave Prussian replied, "Comrade, could we do less? this is the anniversary of the battle of

Jena." In the course of this desperate cavalry encounter, six regiments of cuirassiers, fifteen hundred strong, which had come up with Augereau, and had recently arrived from Spain, were almost totally destroyed. Murat, who threw himself with his wonted gallantry upon the enemy, was on the point of being made prisoner. When the Prussian cuirassiers broke those of France in the close of the day, he was obliged to flee, closely pursued by the enemy; and an officer who headed the pursuit, almost touching the monarch, repeatedly called out, "Stop, stop, king!" A faithful follower of Joachim passed his sword through the pursuer's body, and so effected the monarch's deliverance; for which he was made an esquire of the king on the spot, and next day received the decoration of the Legion of Honour from Napoleon.<sup>1</sup>

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While the vast masses of the Allies were thus in all directions converging towards Leipsic, Napoleon remained inactive at Düben, waiting the concentration of his corps to carry into execution the plan which he had so long meditated, of transferring the war to the Prussian territory, and, under the protection of the strong places which he still held on the Elbe and the Oder, maintaining the contest in the space hitherto untouched between these two rivers.\* When he came to propose this bold design, however, to his marshals, he experienced a unanimous and most determined resistance. They were not equally sanguine with the Emperor as to the success of future operations; they had experienced the inability of their troops to contend with the Allies when the animating effect of his presence was no longer felt; and they not unnaturally entertained the greatest dread of plunging, with two hundred and fifty thousand men, into the north of Germany,<sup>2</sup> when four hundred thousand Allied troops were prepared to interpose between them and the

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 106.  
Odel. ii. 18.  
Better, i. 160,  
161. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
670, 674.

<sup>16.</sup>  
Napoleon's  
project for  
carrying the  
war into  
Prussia.

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii.  
372. Jom.  
iv. 438.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
121, 122.

\* "The plan of the Emperor was to have allowed the Allies to advance into the territory between the Elbe and the Saale, and then, manœuvring under protection of the fortresses and magazines of Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, and Hamburg, to have carried the war into the territory between the Elbe and the Oder, on which latter river France still held Glogau, Stettin, and Cüstrin; and, according to circumstances, to have raised the blockade of Dantzic, Zamose, and Modlin; on the Vistula. Such was the success which might have been expected from that vast plan, that the coalition would have been disorganised by it."—NAPOLEON in *Montholon*, ii. 125.

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17.

Which is  
opposed by  
his marshals,  
and their  
reasons for so  
doing.

Rhine, and cut them off entirely from their communications with the French empire.

Granting that they would find provisions for a considerable period in the fields of northern Prussia, and shelter from the fortresses of the Elbe and the Oder, of which they still retained possession, how were they to get ammunition and military stores for so vast a host in the plains of Brandenburg, or forage for their cavalry amidst the clouds of light horse by which they would speedily be enveloped? In the desperate strife in which they would be engaged, when each party threw himself upon his enemy's communications, and disregarded his own, was it not probable that two hundred and fifty thousand would be crushed by four hundred and fifty thousand, and the party inferior in light horse by the one which had so great a superiority in that formidable arm? Above all, what would the Allies lose by the war being transferred into Prussia but Berlin, and the warlike resources, now nearly exhausted, of that diminutive realm?—they still retained Austria, Silesia, and southern Germany, from which they could derive all their supplies.

1. *Jom. iv.*  
438, 439.  
*Fain, ii. 372.*  
373. *Las*  
*Cases, vi. 38,*  
40. *Vict. et*  
*Conq. xxii.*  
121, 122.

But if the French were irrevocably cut off from the Rhine, a few weeks' warfare, such as that which had recently occurred, would exhaust all their resources; and the very magnitude of their forces would the sooner paralyse them, from the failure of all the muniments of war.<sup>1</sup>

18.

Napoleon's  
interview  
with his  
marshals,  
and reasons  
for advancing  
to Berlin.

Notwithstanding these obvious considerations, Napoleon was strongly bent upon carrying his bold project into execution; and the four days that he spent at Düben, endeavouring to overcome the repugnance of his marshals, and revolving in his mind the probable risks and advantages of the undertaking, were among the most gloomy and painful of his life. "When the intentions of the Emperor," says Caulaincourt, "to cross the Elbe, and carry the war into Prussia, became known, there was a general explosion of murmurs in the army, 'Are we then,' said they, 'to recommence a levy of bucklers in Prussia, and go and bury the remains of the army at Berlin? Has he not yet slaughtered enough? This will never come to an end. It is too late to adventure on this perilous campaign. Had he replaced us on the Rhine,

we should have found winter quarters ; and in spring, if necessary, have resumed the offensive. We have had enough of fighting : we must regain France.' I was in the saloon of the Emperor when the staff in a body came to supplicate him to abandon his projects on Berlin, and march on Leipsic. No one who did not witness that deplorable scene, can conceive what he suffered in that moment. The reasons they advanced were futile in the extreme. He remained cold and reserved. 'My plan,' replied he, 'has been deeply calculated : I have admitted into it, as a probable contingency, the defection of Bavaria : I am convinced that the plan of marching on Berlin is good. A retrograde movement, in the circumstances in which we are placed, is a disastrous step ; and those who oppose my projects have undertaken a serious responsibility—I will think on it, gentlemen.' With these words he re-entered his cabinet, and remained the whole remainder of the day wrapped in thought, silent and moody. The weather was sombre and cold : the wind blew with violence, and moaned through the vast corridors of the ancient chateau of Düben, and its old lead-encased windows trembled in their sockets. Every thing in that mournful residence bore the character of profound melancholy." It is interesting to recollect that exactly similar circumstances attended the decisive debate in the National Assembly of France on the 17th June 1789, when the sovereignty of the nation was assumed, the monarchy overthrown, and the march of the Revolution rendered inevitable.<sup>1</sup>\*

<sup>1</sup> Caul.  
Souvenirs,  
261, 263.

In spite of all the obstacles which the marshals threw in his way, it is probable that the Emperor would have ventured on the movement immediately, had not news arrived on the 12th, which rendered it impossible. The cabinet of Munich, which, ever since the war began in Germany, had been besieged with entreaties on the part of its subjects to abandon the Confederation of the Rhine and join the alliance against France, had at length, notwithstanding its strong partiality for Napoleon, and natural gratitude for the benefits he had conferred upon Bavaria, been compelled to yield. A treaty had been signed at Ried, on the 8th October,

19.  
Defection of  
Bavaria,  
which over-  
turns his pro-  
ject.  
Nov. 12.

\* *Ante*, Chap. iv. § 53.

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which had secured the accession of that state to the grand alliance. This important event, which the Emperor had foreseen, as he had been forewarned of it by the King of Bavaria, but which was not equally expected by the army, gave great additional weight to the arguments of the marshals who urged a return to France. "By this inconceivable defection of Bavaria," said they, "the question is entirely changed; we must look forward to the other defections which will follow. Würtemberg, Baden, and Darmstadt, will be swept away by the impulse given so violently to the north of Germany. The Austrian army, which was on the Inn, is doubtless already in march for the Rhine. The Bavarian army will follow it. They will draw after them the whole armed force which they find on the road, and then our frontier is at once menaced and invaded. What can be so urgent, then, as to draw near to it? It is always, without doubt, an evil to change a plan; and the peril here is the greater, that we must operate towards the Rhine, when we were prepared to have marched over the Elbe. But is it not better to resign ourselves to it, than to lose every thing? Circumstances have changed: we must change with them." The Emperor was not convinced by these reasons, how weighty soever they might appear; but he yielded to the torrent, and gave orders to recall Reynier and Bertrand, who were making ready to march on Berlin; and all was prepared for a retreat to Leipsic.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
377, 378.  
Jom. v. 439,  
440.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 718,  
719.

20.  
Fearful  
danger with  
which the  
French were  
environed.

When this resolution was taken, however, matters had proceeded to such extremities, that it was not only impossible to regain the Rhine without a battle, but the losses likely to be incurred, in case of disaster, were frightful. St Cyr was to be left at Dresden with thirty-five thousand men, and Davoust with twenty-five thousand at Hamburg; Magdeburg, Wittenberg, and Torgau, had each its garrison, which would be speedily surrounded; and if the French army were obliged to continue its retreat to the Rhine, it was easy to foresee that the whole fortresses on the Elbe, with ninety thousand men in arms within their walls, would become the prey of the victor. Magdeburg contained the great magazine of provisions for the army: the grand park of artillery, and reserves of ammunition, which had been stopped at



Eilenburg, were hurried into Torgau ; while the King of Saxony prepared to follow the fortunes of the Grand Army to Leipsic. In this way, Napoleon set out to fight his way back to the Rhine, through two hundred and fifty thousand enemies, separated both from his magazines and his reserve artillery and ammunition. It must be admitted that a more perilous position could hardly be conceived, and that the system of pushing forward, and making war maintain war, had now been strained to the very uttermost. The Emperor felt his danger ; but still trusted to his star. "A thunderbolt," said he afterwards, "alone could have saved us ; but nothing was desperate so long as I had the chances of a battle ; and in our position a single victory might have restored to us the north as far as Dantzic."<sup>1</sup>

With joyful steps the army obeyed the order to face about and march towards the Rhine. Joy beamed in every countenance ; the sounds of mirth were heard in every rank : at length their sufferings were come to an end, and they were to revisit their beloved France. The Emperor set out early on the morning of the 15th, and arrived at noon at LEIPSIC, where Marmont and Augereau had some days before united their forces. In approaching the city, which he already foresaw was to be the theatre of a decisive battle, he cast an eager glance over the heights of Pfaffendorf, and the windings of the Partha, which protect on that side the approach to the town. He then rode out to survey the ramparts which encircle the old town and separate it from the suburbs ; and, while doing so, the sound of cannon was heard in the direction of Pegau. It was the King of Naples, who, on the position of Magdeborn, arrested the approach of the advanced guard of Schwartzenberg's army. Five corps, and a numerous body of cavalry, in all eighty thousand men, were there assembled under his orders. He had previously intended to conduct the bulk of his army through Leipsic, and join the Emperor to the north of that city, conceiving that it was in that direction that the battle was to be fought ; and, under this idea, he had abandoned to the enemy the important defiles at Grobern and Gochrew.<sup>2</sup> But being informed the same day of the resolution of Napoleon to hold the town to the last

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<sup>1</sup> Las Cases, vi. 38. Fain, ii. 378, 381. Die Grosse Chron. i. 719.

21.

Universal joy with which the French army received the orders to move towards Leipsic.

Oct. 13.

Oct. 14.

2 Jan. iv.

446, 447.

Fain, ii. 383,

384. Bout.

108, 109.

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22.  
Description  
of the town  
and environs  
of Leipsic.

extremity, he retraced his steps the day following, and took post on the heights of Magdeborn, where the severe cavalry action took place between the French dragoons and the Russian and Prussian cuirassiers, which has already been noticed.

The old city of Leipsic, which is of no great extent, is surrounded by an irregular rampart, which forms nearly a square. It consists of a dilapidated curtain of masonry, covered by a ditch almost obliterated, without a counter-scarp, beyond which broad boulevards, planted with trees, form a spacious and shady walk for the citizens. The suburbs, which stretch, as in most continental cities, beyond this verdant belt, were much more considerable at that period; and they were then, as now, also shut in towards the south and east, by walls, and the gates strengthened by palisades; but towards the north-west, on the side of the Partha, they were altogether open. To the west and south-west, on the road to France, the city is bounded by the marshes of the Elster and the Pleisse, which streams, flowing in a lazy current to the north-west, enclose between them swampy meadows nearly two miles broad, wholly impassable for carriages. Though those rivers are of no great breadth, they are so deep and muddy, that they are in most places unfordable either by cavalry or infantry. This broad marsh is crossed only by the road to Lützen and Mayence, which, after traversing the long and narrow street which leads to the barrier of Machranstadt, enters the city by the gate of Halle, over a bridge at the same place. There were no other arches over the Elster but one or two wooden ones for foot passengers, and the stone bridge over which the great road passes, well known from the frightful catastrophe a few days after, which has rendered it immortal in history. To the east the country consists of a beautiful plain, in the highest state of cultivation, offering a theatre worthy of the battle which was to decide the fate of the world. To the south-east, like a chain of verdure, extend the hills of WACHAU, then occupied in force by Murat's army; while to the north-west, in the direction of Möckern, the windings of the Partha, and the gentle swells and villages adjoining its banks, present a variety of obstacles to retard the advance of an approaching enemy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Personal observations.  
Bout. 161.  
Cap. ix.  
Introd. 15.  
Fain, ii. 383.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 757,  
758, 762.

No sooner was the arrival of the Emperor known to Murat, than he hastened to wait upon him; and the two sovereigns rode out together toward the heights behind Lieberwolkwitz, from whence the whole plain to the south-east of Leipsic can be descried. From an elevated point in that direction, near the bed of the Pleisse, Napoleon surveyed the whole field, and gave the necessary orders for the day following. Seated by a blazing watch-fire, after his usual custom, in the midst of the squares of his Guard, he long and anxiously surveyed the ground, and in particular the mossy and swampy beds of the Pleisse and the Elster, which extended, in a broad belt, nearly two leagues across, in the rear of the whole position occupied by the French army. From thence he rode on to the hills of Lieberwolkwitz, from which elevated ridge, not only the positions of his own troops, but the advanced posts of the enemy, were visible. A few gun-shots only separated the two armies. The heads of the Russian and Austrian columns appeared in great strength within cannon range. But as yet all was still: not a sound was heard, and no appearance of hostilities was visible. Here an imposing ceremony took place, in the distribution of eagles by Napoleon to three regiments which had not hitherto received them; and he returned to Leipsic by the course of the Pleisse, after inspecting Poniatowski's Poles, who occupied the marshy banks of that stream.<sup>1</sup>

The positions occupied by the French army on the night of the 15th, were as follow:—Bertrand's corps held Lindenau, at the entrance of the chaussée which crossed the marshes of the Elster, in order to cover that important defile, and keep at a distance a strong column of the enemy, which, having gained the great road to Erfurth, menaced the rear, and had already entirely cut off the communications of the French army. To the eastward of the marshes, under the immediate command of the Emperor, three corps were stationed, facing to the southward; viz. Poniatowski's Poles on the right, on the edge of the Elster and Pleisse, between Mark-Klee and Connewitz; next Augereau, on the southern slope of the heights of Wachau, flanked on either side by Milhaud's cavalry; behind Wachau were placed Victor's men; from thence to Lieberwolkwitz stretched Lauriston's corps; on

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23.

Napoleon  
inspects the  
field of  
battle.

<sup>1</sup> Odel. i. 15,  
17. Fain, ii.  
381, 383.  
Ploto, ii.  
356. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i. 746,  
749.

24.

Positions of  
the French  
army round  
Leipsic.  
Oct. 15.

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<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
127. Bout.  
112. Vaud.  
i. 204.  
Kausler, 932.  
Plotho, ii.  
340.

their left, Macdonald's extended to Holzhausen ; Latour Maubourg and Sebastiani's horse stood on either flank of Victor's corps ; while the Imperial Guard, around Napoleon, were in reserve near Probstheyda. In all, six corps of infantry and four of horse, mustering a hundred and ten thousand men, of whom eighteen thousand were cavalry ; and of these a hundred thousand were to the eastward of the Pleisse, and on the proper field of battle.<sup>1</sup>

25.  
Forces and  
position of  
the French  
on the north  
of Leipsic.

To the north-west of Leipsic, but so far removed from it as to be a separate army, a considerable force was collected to combat Blücher and the Prince-Royal of Sweden, who, in that direction, were drawing near to the city with a formidable array of troops. They consisted of Marmont's corps and two divisions of Ney's, which were posted between Möckern and Euteritzsch ; the other division of Ney's corps, with the artillery, were on march from Düben, but had not yet taken up their ground. Arrighi's cavalry, however, three thousand strong, had come up, and Reynier's Saxons were hourly expected. The forces on the ground consisted of forty-five thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry. The whole army, already arrived or on the road from Düben, and certain to take part in the battle, amounted to a hundred and forty thousand infantry and thirty-five thousand cavalry, with seven hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, distributed in three hundred and eighty-four battalions, and three hundred and seventy-two squadrons. An immense force ! equal to that with which Napoleon had conquered at Wagram,\* and superior to that which had fought at Borodino ;† but, great as it was, it was overmatched by the ranks of the Allies, who had now arrayed under their banners the greatest military force that modern Europe had ever seen assembled in a single field.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Vaud. i.  
201, 204.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
127, 128.  
Bout. 108,  
109. Lab. ii.  
379. Kausler,  
932. Bat. de  
Leipsic,  
Posen, 1835,  
32. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i. 755.

26.  
Position of  
the grand  
Allied army  
to the south  
of Leipsic.

The forces of the Allies were divided, like the French, into two armies ; the principal of which, under Schwarzenberg, was opposed to the Grand Army of Napoleon, while that of the north, under Bernadotte and Blücher, advanced against Ney and Marmont. They were thus arranged in the grand army for the attack of the French from the south. On their own left, opposite to the French

\* *Ante*, Chap. lix. § 24.† *Ibid.* Chap. lxxii. § 79.

right, and on the edge of the morass of the Elster, stood Giulay's corps of Austrians, with Lichtenstein and Thielman's light troops; the centre, opposite to Wachau, and stretching from thence towards the Elster, was very strong, consisting of Meerfeldt and the Prince of Hesse Homburg's Austrians, Wittgenstein's Russians, and Kleist's Prussians; while the right wing, opposed to Macdonald and Lauriston, was composed of Klenau's corps of Austrians; Ziethen's brigade of Prussians, who were at Gross Possnau, having their extreme flank covered by the Cossacks under Platoff. The reserve, consisting of the Russian and Prussian-guards, and two divisions of cuirassiers, under the Grand Duke Constantine and Milaradowitch, were at Magdeborn.<sup>1</sup>

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The great defect of this arrangement, which no representations on the part of the Russian generals could induce Prince Schwartzenberg to alter, was, that the rivers Elster and Pleisse flowed through the middle of the Allied line, separating thus the left wing from the centre, and one part of the centre from the other—a most perilous situation, if any disaster had rendered it necessary for one part of the Allied line to assist the other, and which exposed the portion of it placed between the two rivers to imminent danger. The Austrian general even carried his infatuation so far, as to desire to post the flower of the Allied army, the Russian and Prussian guards, in the narrow space between the Pleisse and the Elster; and it was only by the determined resistance of the Emperor Alexander, that they were brought to the decisive point on the right, to the east of both these rivers. Although Benningsen's corps and Colloredo's reserves had not yet come up, the force here assembled was immense: it consisted of no less than a hundred and forty-three thousand combatants, of which twenty-five thousand were cavalry, with six hundred and twenty guns. Benningsen and Colloredo's reserve, although not in time for the battle on the 16th, might be expected on the day following; and they were thirty-eight thousand more, of whom three thousand were horse, with a hundred and thirty pieces of cannon.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kausler, 921. Vaud. i. 202. Bout. 110. Die Grosse Chron. i. 755, 756. Fain, ii. 390, 407.

27.  
Great error  
of this  
arrangement.

<sup>2</sup> Kausler, 931. Vaud. i. 202. Bout. 110, 111. Jom. iv. 448, 449.

To the north of Leipsic, the disproportion was still greater. The armies of Silesia and Bernadotte, which lay in that direction, formed in all a mass of a hundred and

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28.

Forces and  
position of  
the Allies to  
the north of  
Leipsic.

three thousand combatants, of whom sixteen thousand were cavalry, with three hundred and ninety pieces of cannon. They had not, however, all come up. Bernadotte, as already mentioned, had made an eccentric movement towards the Elbe, and the troops in line consisted only of the corps of Langeron and York, with Sacken in reserve, which had their headquarters at Schkeuditz, on the road to Halle; and they amounted to fifty-six thousand effective men, with three hundred and fifty-six guns. Thus the contending parties towards Möckern were very nearly matched on the first day; the French having forty-eight thousand, and the Allies fifty-six thousand men. But if the contest should be prolonged for another day, and the Prince-Royal come up in time to take part in it, forty-seven thousand additional combatants would be thrown into the balance, to which the French reserves, brought from Düben, would not oppose more than thirty thousand. Thus, upon the whole, for the final shock on which the contest would ultimately depend, the Allies could count upon two hundred and ninety thousand men, and above thirteen hundred guns; while the French could only reckon on a hundred and seventy-five thousand men, and seven hundred and twenty pieces of cannon. A fearful disproportion, which all the advantages of Napoleon's central position and great abilities could hardly compensate; and which demonstrated that the formidable military confederacy, of which he had so long formed the head, was now fairly overmatched by the vast host which its intolerable exactions had arrayed to assert the independence of mankind.<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 121.  
Kausler, 931,  
932. Vaud.  
ii. 202, 203  
Fain, ii. 405.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 754.

29.

Feelings of  
the soldiers  
on both  
sides.

At midnight on the night of the 15th, two rockets were sent up to a prodigious height from the headquarters of Prince Schwartzemberg, to the south of Leipsic, and were immediately answered by three, two of a blue and one of a red light, from Blücher's, on the north. These awful signals told the assembled myriads, that all things were in readiness in both armies, and that the hour of the final struggle had struck. All was tranquil in the French lines: their watchfires burned with a steady light, and no moving figures around the flame indicated an intention to

\* See App. B., Chap. lxxxi., where a detailed account of the whole forces engaged on either side at Leipsic is given.

retreat. Unspeakable was the ardour which the solemnity of the moment excited in the Allied ranks. Now was the appointed time—now was the day of salvation. Retreat to the enemy without a conflict was impossible: the host of Germany encircled his ranks: on the morrow, the mighty conflict which was to avenge the wrongs of twenty years, and determine whether they and their children were to be freemen or slaves, was to be decided. Confidence pervaded every bosom; hope beat high in every heart; recent success, present strength, seemed the certain harbingers of victory. A sombre feeling of disquietude, on the other hand, pervaded the French army: their ancient courage was the same, their hereditary spirit was unshaken; but disaster had chilled their ardour, diminished numbers depressed their hopes, and their confidence in the star of the Emperor had been irrevocably shaken. Still they looked forward undaunted to the fight, and resolved to show themselves, under whatever fortune, worthy of the eagles which they bore.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Capet. x.  
218.

At daybreak, the following noble proclamation was issued by Prince Schwartzberg, and read at the head of every company and squadron in his army:—"The most important epoch of this sacred war has arrived, brave warriors! Prepare for the combat. The bond which unites so many powerful nations in the most just, as the greatest of causes, is about to be yet closer drawn, and rendered indissoluble on the field of battle. Russians, Prussians, Austrians! you all combat for the same cause: you fight for the liberty of Europe—for the independence of your children—for the immortal renown of your names. All for each! each for all! With this device, the sacred combat is about to commence. Be faithful at the decisive moment, and victory is our own." No proclamation was issued to the French army: no heart-stirring words breathed the fire of Napoleon's spirit, or announced the well-known prophecy of victory—an ominous circumstance, indicating in no equivocal manner that the Emperor's confidence in his fortune was at an end.<sup>2</sup>

30.  
Schwartz-  
berg's procla-  
mation to his  
troops.<sup>2</sup> Capet. x.  
218, 219.

Early in the morning of the 16th, Napoleon repaired to the army of Murat, and, from a height near Lieberwolkwitz, long and anxiously surveyed the field of the approaching battle. Precisely at nine three guns were

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31.  
Commence-  
ment of the  
battle, and  
early success  
of the Allies.

discharged from the centre of Schwartzenberg's army, and immediately the fire began along the whole line. The Allied columns, dark and massy, advanced to the attack in the most imposing array; two hundred pieces of artillery preceded their march, and soon the cannonade on the two sides exceeded any thing ever heard in the annals of war. The earth, literally speaking, trembled under the discharge, on the two sides, of above a thousand guns: the balls flew over every part of the field of battle, and killed several persons in Napoleon's suite, as well as in the Guards and cuirassiers, who were stationed a little in the rear; while through the midst of the iron tempest the Allied columns advanced to the attack.\* Kleist, with the left, following the course of the Elster, moved against Mark-Klee, of which he soon made himself master. To check his progress beyond that village, a considerable body of Milhaud's horse were brought forward by Poniatowski; but Lewachoff, at the head of two regiments of Russian cuirassiers, boldly charged across the ravine which descends from the heights of Wachau to that village, and, scaling the rugged banks on the opposite side, dispersed the enemy's horse, and, pushing right on, carried confusion into the French right, and even compelled Napoleon himself, with his suite, to give ground. The Imperial Guard and two regiments of cuirassiers were brought up; but though they checked Lewachoff's advance, yet he retired in good order, and brought back his men without sustaining any serious loss. In the centre, however, the attack was not equally successful. Prince Eugene of Wurtemberg was at first repulsed at Wachau by the heroic defence of Victor's men, while his guns were silenced by the superior fire of the French artillery. And although, by a great effort, he at length carried the village, he was speedily driven out again with great loss by the French reserves; while, on the right, Klenau and Gorzakoff,<sup>1</sup> not having succeeded in reaching Lieberwolkwitz at the same time, successively

<sup>1</sup> Kausler, 937, 938.  
Bout. 113,  
114. Jom.  
iv. 454.  
Odel. ii. 19,  
20. Vaud. i.  
206. Plotho,  
ii. 365, 366.

\* "Ὡς τὸν ἔθνεα πολλὰ νεῶν ἄπο καὶ κλισιάων  
'Ες πιδίον προχέοντο Σκαμανδρείον· αὐτὰς ὑπὸ χθρῶν  
Σαιεδαλέων κονάβριζε ποδῶν αὐτῶν τε καὶ ἵππων.  
'Ἔσταν δ' ἐν λιμῶνι Σκαμανδρείῳ ἀνθεμόεντι  
Μυρσίαι, ὅσσα τε φύλλα καὶ ἄνθη γίγνεται ὤρη·"

*Iliad*, ii. 464.



failed in dislodging Lauriston permanently from that important village, though it was at first carried by the Austrians under the first of these generals. Six times did the brave Russians and Austrians return to the attack of these villages, and six times were they repulsed by the invincible resolution of Lauriston's men, supported by Macdonald's corps and Sebastiani's dragoons.

At eleven o'clock Macdonald brought up his whole corps in an oblique direction from Holzhausen, and taking Klenau's attacking corps in flank, he gained considerable success. The Austrians were driven back, and a battery which they had established on the heights of the Kolmberg was taken by Charpentier's division. Encouraged by this advantage on his left, and deeming the enemy in front of Lieberwolkwitz sufficiently exhausted

by three hours' continued and severe fighting, Napoleon, who arrived at noon on the heights behind Wachau, followed by the guards and cuirassiers, resolved to put in force his favourite measure of a grand attack on the enemy's centre. With this view, two divisions of the Young Guard, under Oudinot, were brought up and stationed close behind Wachau; two others, under Mortier, were sent to Lieberwolkwitz; Augereau was despatched from his ground on the right centre, to support Poniatowski, who had nearly succeeded in regaining Mark-Klee; and behind him the Old Guard moved forward to Dölit, so as to be in readiness to support either the right or the centre, as circumstances might require. Finally, Drouot, with sixty guns of the Guard, so well known in all Napoleon's former battles, was brought to the front of the centre; and these pieces, moving steadily forward, soon made the earth shake by their rapid and continued fire. The Allied centre was unable to resist this desperate attack: Victor and Oudinot, preceded by the terrible battery, steadily gained ground; the advance of Macdonald's column at Wagram seemed to be again renewed under circumstances precisely similar; and Napoleon, deeming the battle gained, sent word to the King of Saxony in Leipsic that he was entirely successful, and had made two thousand prisoners. He enjoined him to cause all the bells to be rung, in the city and adjoining villages, to announce his victory.<sup>1</sup>

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32.

Napoleon  
prepares a  
grand attack  
on the  
enemy's  
centre.

<sup>1</sup> Bont. 114,  
115. Odel.  
ii. 21, 22.  
Kausler, 939.  
Vaud. i. 205,  
206. Lab. i.  
382, 383.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 771,  
775.

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33.  
Schwartz-  
berg's mea-  
sures to sup-  
port his  
centre.

Schwartzberg, finding his centre thus violently assailed, made the most vigorous efforts to support it. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, unable to resist the shock of Victor, supported by the Old Guard and Drouot's artillery, gave ground, and was rapidly falling into confusion, when Raeffskoi was brought up to support him with his invincible grenadiers. The brave Russians took post, one division behind the sheepfold of Auenhayn, and the other at Gossa; and, without once flinching before the terrible battery, kept up so incessant a fire of musketry as at length arrested the progress of the enemy. Klenau, however, attacked in front by Lauriston, and threatened in flank by Macdonald, was unable to maintain himself on the slopes of Lieberwolkwitz, and was forced back, after a desperate resistance by his cavalry, to Gross Possnau and Seyffertshayn, where he at length succeeded in maintaining himself, though with great difficulty, till nightfall. Schwartzberg, seeing his centre so nearly forced by the impetuous attack of the French Guard, ordered up the Austrian reserve, under Prince Hesse Homburg, from Zöbiger, where it had been stationed, in spite of the strenuous remonstrances of Alexander and Jomini, on the other side of the Pleisse, and consequently in a situation where it could not be brought to bear on the decisive point without a long delay. They were hurried as fast as possible across the river; but meanwhile Napoleon, desirous of beating down the resistance of Raeffskoi's grenadiers, moved forward his reserve cavalry under Latour Maubourg and Kellerman. At the same time an attack by infantry was ordered, under Charpentier, on an old intrenchment on a hill, called the Swedish redoubt, where the bones of the warriors of the great Gustavus reposed, which had been won from the French in the early part of the day. So vehement, however, was the fire from the batteries on the summit, that the assaulting regiments paused at the foot of the hill. Napoleon hastened to the spot:—"What regiment is that?" said he to Charpentier.—"The 22d light infantry," replied the general. "That is impossible," replied Napoleon; "the 22d would never let themselves be cut down by grape-shot without taking their muskets from their shoulders." These words being repeated to the regiment,<sup>1</sup> they were so

<sup>1</sup> Odel, ii.  
331. Bout.  
115, 116.  
Jom. iv. 455,  
456. Fain, ii.  
397, 399.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 131, 132.  
Ploto, ii.  
378, 379.

stung by the reproach, that, breaking into a charge, they ran up the hill and carried the post, which seemed to give the Emperor a decisive advantage in that part of the field of battle.

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Such was the impression soon after produced by the reserve cavalry, that terrible arm which always formed so important an element in Napoleon's tactics, that it had well-nigh decided the battle in his favour. At one o'clock in the afternoon, Kellerman, at the head of six thousand horse, debouched from Wachau, between Connewitz and Grobern, to the left of that village, supported by several squares of infantry, and advanced rapidly against the retiring columns of Prince Eugene of Würtemberg. Lewachoff, proud of his gallant achievement in the morning, threw himself, with his three regiments of Russian cuirassiers, in the way of the charge; but he was speedily overwhelmed, and driven back with great loss towards Gossa. The consequences might have been fatal, had not Alexander, by the advice of Jomini, shortly before brought up his guards and reserves to the menaced point in the centre, where they were stationed behind the Göselbach; while Schwartzenberg, now sensible, when it was all but too late, of his inexplicable error in stationing the Austrian reserves in a position between the Elster and the Pleisse, where they could be of no service, hurried forward the Austrian cuirassiers of the guard to the point of danger. This superb corps, consisting of six regiments cased in steel, the very flower of the Imperial army, under Count Nostitz, after crossing the Pleisse at Grobern, arrived at the menaced point at the critical moment, and instantly bore down with loud cheers and irresistible force on the flank of Kellerman's dragoons, when somewhat disordered by the rout of Lewachoff's men. The effect was instantaneous; the French horse were routed and driven back in great disorder to the heights behind Wachau, where, however, they re-formed under cover of the powerful batteries which there protected the French centre.<sup>1</sup>

34.  
Desperate  
combat of  
cavalry in the  
centre.

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
131, 132.  
Jom. iv. 456,  
458. Bout.  
116, 117. .  
Kausler, 940.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 781,  
782. Plotho,  
ii. 384, 392.

While extreme danger was thus narrowly avoided in the centre to the west of Wachau, peril still more imminent threatened the Allies to the east of that village. Latour Maubourg and Murat, at the head of four thousand

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35.

Latour Mau-  
bourg's vehe-  
ment charge  
to the east of  
Wachau.

<sup>1</sup> Vaud. i.  
207. Bout.  
116, 117.  
Fain, ii. 399.

36.  
Which is  
defeated by  
Alexander in  
person.

<sup>2</sup> Bout. 116,  
118. Vaud. i.  
207. Jom. iv.  
457, 458.  
Fain, ii. 399.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 780,  
791.

cuirassiers of the guard, there bore down on the flank of the Allied right, while Victor and Lauriston assailed its front. This double charge was at first attended with great success. Though the brave Latour Maubourg had his leg carried off by a cannon-shot in the advance,\* the ponderous mass advanced in admirable order under Bordesoult, broke Prince Eugene of Würtemberg's infantry by a charge in flank, routed ten light squadrons of the Russian guard, which strove to arrest its progress, and captured six-and-twenty guns. So violent was the onset, so complete the opening made in the centre of the Allies by this terrible charge, that the French horsemen pushed on to the position where the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia had taken their station, and they were obliged to mount on horseback and retire a little distance to the rear, to avoid being made prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

But in this decisive moment Alexander was not wanting to himself or the cause with which he was intrusted. Imitating the coolness of Napoleon on occasion of a similar crisis at the cemetery of Eylau,† he boldly advanced to the front, and ordered the red Cossacks of the guard under Orloff Denisoff to charge the enemy's flank, while the heavy cavalry of Barclay were also ordered up, and the last reserve batteries directed to open their fire. These dispositions, promptly taken and rapidly executed, changed the fate of the day. With resistless force, Orloff Denisoff's men, all chosen cavaliers from the banks of the Don, bore down on the flank of the French cuirassiers immediately after they had captured the guns, and when their horses were blown by previous efforts. Their long lances were more than a match for the cuirassiers' sabres: instantly the whole hostile squadrons were pierced through and routed, four-and-twenty of the guns retaken, and the French cavalry driven back with immense loss to their own lines. Resuming the offensive, Raefskoi's grenadiers now attacked the sheep-farm of Auenhayn,<sup>2</sup> the object already of such desperate strife, and carried it at the point of the bayonet—an acquisition

\* Amputation was immediately performed on this distinguished officer, which he bore with his usual courage and *sang-froid*. His servant, a faithful domestic, having given way to an agony of grief at the sight, he said "Why do you distress yourself? you will only have one boot to clean."—ODEL, ii. 32.

† *Ante*, Chap. xliv. § 66.

which, from its elevated position, again gave the Allies the advantage in that part of the field.

The crisis of the battle was now passed ; the direction of Napoleon's attacks was clearly indicated, and Schwartzberg had gained time to rectify his faulty dispositions, and bring up his powerful reserves from the other side of the Pleisse to the scene of danger. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the Austrian reserves came up to the front at all points: Bianchi relieved, at Mark-Klee, Kleist's troops, who had with great difficulty maintained themselves there against the attack of Augereau and Poniatowski ; and, turning the powerful batteries which they brought up against the flank of Augereau's corps, they compelled it to fall back to its original position. Bianchi followed up his advantage: he issued from Mark-Klee and charged the right flank of Napoleon's centre with loud cries, and with such vigour that all around the Emperor deemed the battle lost. He himself was forced to retire some hundred paces. Instantly, however, he ordered up the battalions of the Old Guard, who stopped the head of the column ; but its numerous artillery played in the most destructive manner on the flank of Victor's corps, and compelled it to fall back to the French lines. At the same time, the cannon sounded violently on the north, and repeated couriers from Marmont and Ney announced that, so far from being able to render the Emperor any further assistance, they could with difficulty maintain themselves against the impetuous attacks of Blucher.<sup>1</sup>

Sensible that, if success now escaped him, he would in vain seek to recall it on the following day, when the Prince-Royal, Benningsen, and Colloredo had brought up nearly a hundred thousand fresh troops to the enemy's standards, Napoleon resolved to make one effort more for victory. With this view, between five and six o'clock, he re-formed his reserve cavalry behind Lieberwolkwitz: Victor's and Lauriston's corps were thrown into a deep column of attack, and, preceded by a numerous array of artillery, advanced against Gossa. Such was the weight of the column, and the rapidity with which the guns were discharged, that Gorzakoff's corps was broken, and Gossa taken ; but in this extremity Schwartzberg

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37.  
Arrival of  
the Austrian  
reserve on  
the field.

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 118.  
Vaud. i. 208.  
Jom. iv. 458.  
Fain, ii. 401.  
Odel. ii.  
Plottho, ii.  
393. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i. 791,  
794.

38.  
Napoleon's  
last efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.

183, 134.

Bout. 118,

119. Jom. iv.

438, 439.

Kausler, 941.

Fain, ii. 401.

Plotho, ii.

379.

brought up the Prussian division of Pirsch, which regained the village, and drove back the column to a considerable distance; while a powerful Russian battery of eighty pieces of the guard, by the precision and rapidity of their fire, arrested the progress of the enemy in that quarter. Excessive fatigue prevented either party from making any further efforts in the centre and left, and the battle there was reduced to a furious cannonade, which continued without intermission till night overspread the scene.<sup>1</sup>

39.  
Last attack  
of Meerfeldt,  
which is re-  
pulsed, and  
he is made  
prisoner.

<sup>2</sup> Bout. 119,

120. Jom. iv.

460. Vict. et

Conq. xxii.

134. Fain, ii.

403. Die

Grosse

Chron. i. 793,

800.

Meerfeldt soon after came up, having been long retarded in his march across the swamps between the Pleisse and the Elster, by the almost impracticable nature of the ground. Late in the evening, however, he succeeded in crossing the latter stream by the ford of Dölitz, and was advancing at the head of the leading battalion to attack the French right flank near Mark-Klee, when he was suddenly assailed by a division of the Old Guard in front, and Poniatowski's Poles in flank, and driven back with great loss into the river. Meerfeldt himself was made prisoner, with a whole battalion, and immediately brought into the Emperor's presence. Although the repulse of his corps was of no material consequence to the issue of the day, it threw a ray of glory over this well-contested field of carnage.<sup>2</sup>

40.  
Operations of  
Giulay at  
Lindenau.

On the other side of the Elster, Giulay was engaged the whole day, with various success, against Bertrand's corps. Though far removed from the headquarters of either army, and separated by five miles of marshes from the great body of the combatants, the struggle there was one of life and death to the French army; for Bertrand fought for Lindenau, and their only line of retreat to the Rhine in case of disaster. The Austrians were at first successful, though not without a desperate struggle. After seven hours' hard fighting, their gallant corps overcame the stubborn resistance of the French, and Bertrand was not only driven out of Lindenau into the marshes, but forced to take refuge behind the Luppe, where his troops, drawn up in several squares, maintained the contest only by a loose fire of tirailleurs. If Giulay had, as soon as he got possession of the town, broken the bridges of Lindenau, the communications of the French army would have been

entirely cut off, and their retreat to the Rhine rendered impossible. Seriously alarmed at the prospect of such a disaster, Napoleon sent positive orders to Bertrand to regain that important post at all hazards, coupled with severe remarks upon his having ever lost it. Stung to the quick by these reproaches, that brave general immediately re-formed his troops into columns of attack, and, falling suddenly on the Austrians, who, deeming the contest over, were off their guard, drove them out of Lindenau, and re-opened the communications of the Grand Army. Giulay, upon this, drew off his troops to the ground they had occupied at the commencement of the action.<sup>1</sup>

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To the north-west of Leipsic, on the side of Möckern, a conflict took place, less important from the number of forces engaged, but not inferior in the valour and obstinacy displayed on both sides, between the armies of Blucher and Ney. The Prussian general, in conformity with the concerted plan of operations, had put himself in motion at daybreak from his position in front of Halle, and advanced in two columns: Langeron by Radefeld and Breitenfeld; and York by Lindenthal on Möckern; while Sacken formed the reserve. Before they reached the enemy, however, who was posted near Schkeuditz, the action had begun on the south of Leipsic; and Ney, who had the command, was so impressed with the awful cannonade which was heard in that direction, that he despatched two divisions of Oudinot's corps, now under the command of Souham, towards Wachau, to reinforce the Emperor. The effects of this generous zeal were in the highest degree disastrous to the French arms. The other divisions of Souham's corps having not yet come up from Düben, the French marshal had not at his disposal, after this large deduction, above twenty-five thousand foot and three thousand horse, while Blucher had fifty-six thousand. Ney drew up his troops in a strong position, the right in front of a wood of some extent in the neighbourhood of Breitenfeld; the line extending from thence through Gross Widderitzsch to Möckern on the left.<sup>1</sup> Advanced posts also occupied Radefeld and other villages in front.<sup>2</sup> Langeron was directed to expel the

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Cong. xxii.  
134. Bout.  
120. Fain, ii.  
407. Lab. ii.  
387, 388.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 802,  
804.

41.  
Battle of  
Möckern  
between  
Blucher and  
Ney.

<sup>2</sup> Plotho, ii.  
386, 389.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 821,  
830.  
Lond. 155,  
156. Bout.  
121, 122.  
Vict. et Cong.  
xxii. 134, 135.

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enemy from Radefeld ; and, pushing on, to force Breitenfeld, and drive him into the open plain beyond, towards Leipsic : while York, on the French left, following the great road to Leipsic, was to turn to its left at Lützschena, and drive the enemy from Lindenthal.

42.  
Defeat of Ney  
by Blücher.

At the first onset, Ney, finding himself assailed by such superior forces, abandoned Radefeld and the villages in front, and drew in his advanced posts over a considerable space to the main line running from Lindenthal to Möckern. There, however, notwithstanding his great inferiority of force, he stood firm, and a most obstinate conflict ensued. The wood on their right, and the villages of Gross and Klein Widderitzsch, furiously assailed by Langeron, were as bravely defended by the French marshal ; but, after being three times taken and retaken, they finally remained in the possession of the Allies. York at the same time commenced a vigorous attack on Möckern, on the extreme French right ; while the Russian horse charged with the utmost gallantry the French batteries and squares in the open plain between the villages. After a most sanguinary conflict, in the course of which it was five times taken and retaken, Möckern was carried by York ; and Marmont's corps, driven back to the open plain in the direction of the Partha, soon fell into disorder, and lost a considerable part of its artillery, under the repeated charges of the Russian and Prussian cavalry. The whole French line was falling into confusion before Sacken came up with the Russian reserve ; so that he was not required to take part in the action. Late in the evening, Delmas' division of Ney's corps arrived from Düben, and was immediately hurried forward to the right, to cover the retreat of the park of Ney's corps, which was in the most imminent danger of falling into the hands of the victorious Russians. But, though this calamity was averted by the good countenance which that body showed, yet it was too late to retrieve the day ; and the shattered remains of Ney's army retired behind the Partha, having lost an eagle, two standards, twenty guns, and two thousand prisoners, besides four thousand killed and wounded, in this well-fought field. In addition, thirty cannon were surprised by the Cossacks on

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 155.  
159. Bout.  
121, 122.  
Jom. iv. 461.  
462. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
135. Fain, ii.  
406. Richter,  
ii. 237.  
Plotho, ii.  
387, 390.



the night following; and this concluded an action in which the French, though defeated by superior numbers, displayed the most heroic courage and devotion.

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The battle of the 16th, though it terminated decisively in favour of the Allies only on the side of the Partha, yet was, in its general results, entirely to their advantage. Situated as Napoleon was, an indecisive action was equivalent to a defeat: his affairs were in such a situation, that nothing could retrieve them but a decisive victory. Under Napoleon in person the French might boast with reason of having had the advantage, since the Allies who made the attack had been unable, excepting at Mark-Klee, to force them from their position; and the loss, which was upwards of fifteen thousand on each side, was pretty nearly balanced. But the defeat at Möckern threatened his rear; the frightful peril incurred at Lindenau, had shown the hazard in which his communications were placed. The enemy on the succeeding day would receive reinforcements to the amount of nearly a hundred thousand men, while he could not draw to his standards above thirty-five thousand; and his position, separated from his reserve park of ammunition, which was at Torgau, and his only magazines, which were at Magdeburg, with a single chaussée traversing two miles of morasses for his line of retreat, was in the last degree perilous. Sound policy, therefore, counselled immediate preparations for a retreat, when his forces were still in a great measure unbroken, and he could, by holding Leipsic as a *tête-du-pont*, gain time for his immense army to defile over the perilous pass in its rear. But Napoleon could not brook the idea of retiring from an open field, in which he himself had commanded. His position, as the head of a revolutionised military state, forbade it. He had announced to the King of Saxony that he had been victorious: all the bells in and around Leipsic had been rung to celebrate his triumph: if he now retreated, it would be to announce to all Europe that he had been defeated. Actuated by these feelings, as well as by a lingering confidence in his good fortune, and in the likelihood of the Allied generals falling into some error which might give him the means of striking a decisive blow from his central position,<sup>1</sup> he resolved to remain

43.  
Result of  
this day's  
fighting.

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 123,  
124. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
136. Rogniat,  
Art de la  
Guerre, 394.  
Jom. iv. 462.  
Plottho, ii.  
385. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
836, 837.

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firm ; and not only made no preparations for a retreat, but gave no directions for throwing any additional bridges over the Elster and Pleisse in his rear, though the engineers could have established twenty in a single night.

44.  
Napoleon's  
conference  
with Meer-  
feldt, whom  
he sends back  
with secret  
proposals.

No sooner had the fire ceased than Napoleon ordered Meerfeldt to be brought into his presence. He hailed with the utmost eagerness the opportunity of re-opening, by means of the Austrian general, with whom he was well acquainted, diplomatic relations, which he hoped might become separate and confidential, with the Emperor Francis and the cabinet of Vienna. Having partaken of the frugal supper which the bivouac would alone afford even for the imperial table, Meerfeldt was at ten at night introduced into the Emperor's cabinet. By a singular coincidence, it was he who had come a suppliant on the part of the Emperor of Germany to solicit the armistice of Leoben : it was he who had conducted, on the part of the cabinet of Vienna, the treaty of Campo-Formio ; and it was from his hand, on the night following the battle of Austerlitz, that the pencil note had come which gave the first opening to the conferences which led to the peace of Presburg. The mutations of fortune had now brought the same general to the Emperor's tent, when the latter in his turn had become the suppliant, and he was to solicit, not to concede, peace and salvation from his former Imperial opponents. He addressed to him some obliging expressions on the misfortune which he had sustained in being made prisoner, and dismissed him to the Austrian headquarters, stored with every imaginable argument that could be urged against continuing in the Russian alliance ; and offered, on condition of an armistice being immediately concluded, to evacuate Germany, and retire behind the Rhine till the conclusion of a general peace.<sup>1\*</sup> "Adieu, general," said he, when he dismissed

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
412, 414.  
Odel. ii. 23.

\* "Our political alliance," said Napoleon, "is broken up ; but between your master and me there is another bond which is indissoluble. That it is which I invoke ; for I shall always place confidence in the regard of my father-in-law. It is to him I shall never cease to appeal from all that passes here. You see how they attack me, and how I defend myself. Does your cabinet never weigh the consequences of such exasperation ? If it is wise it will speedily do so : it can do so this evening ; to-morrow it may perhaps be too late, for who can foretell the events of to-morrow ? They deceive themselves in regard to my disposi-

Meerfeldt on his parole ; "when on my behalf you shall speak of an armistice to the two Emperors, I doubt not the voice which strikes their ears will be eloquent indeed in recollections."

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Napoleon's sense of the dangers of his situation was sufficiently evinced by his offering to retire from Germany on condition that an armistice was agreed to. He passed a melancholy night after Meerfeldt had departed, his tents being placed in the bottom of a dried fishpond, not far from the road which leads to Rochlitz, where they were pitched in the middle of the squares of the Old Guard. The cannon continued to boom occasionally on the side of Mark-Klee through the whole night, where the advanced posts were almost touching each other. The most sombre presentiments filled the minds of the generals who attended on the Emperor : ammunition was already becoming scarce, and no fresh supplies could be obtained ; a few potatoes found in the fields were all the provisions the men could obtain in the country, and the stores in Leipsic would soon be exhausted. Certain ruin appeared to await them, when the army, which had not been able to discomfit the enemy to whom they had been opposed, was assailed in addition by a hundred thousand fresh troops, who would come up on the succeeding day. Still the Emperor, though fully aware of his danger, made no preparations against it ; not a carriage was directed to the rear, not a bridge was thrown over the Elster ; but, relying on the valour of his soldiers, his own good fortune, and the strength of Leipsic as a *point d'appui* to his centre, the mighty conqueror remained in moody obstinacy to await the stroke of fate.<sup>1</sup>

45.  
Mournful  
night at Na-  
poleon's  
headquarters.

<sup>1</sup> Odel. ii. 23,  
25. Jom. iv.  
463. Rogniat,  
Art de la  
Guerre, 393,  
394. Plotho,  
ii. 395-6.  
Better, i. 181.

The Allied sovereigns were too well aware of the advantages of their situation, either to fall into the snare which Napoleon had laid for them, by sending back

tions : I ask nothing but to repose in the shadow of peace, and to dream of the happiness of France, after having dreamt of its glory. You are afraid of the sleep of the lion : you fear that you will never be easy after having pared his nails and cut his mane. You think only of repairing by a single stroke the calamities of twenty years ; and, carried away by this idea, you never perceive the changes which time has made around you, and that now for Austria to gain at the expense of France, is to lose. Reflect on it, general : it is neither Austria, nor France, nor Prussia, singly, that will be able to arrest on the Vistula the inundation of a people, half nomad, essentially conquering, and whose dominions extend from this to China."—FAIN, ii. 412, 413.

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46.  
The Allies  
defer the  
attack till the  
18th.

Meerfeldt with proposals for an armistice, or to throw these advantages away by precipitating the attack before their whole forces had come up. Under pretence, therefore, of referring the proposals to the Emperor of Austria, Schwartzenberg eluded them altogether; and no answer was returned to them till after the French had recrossed the Rhine. Meanwhile, the great reinforcements on which they relied were approaching. Bernadotte, on the 16th, had reached Landsberg, on his way back from the Elbe, to which he had been drawn by Napoleon's demonstrations against Berlin; Benningsen was at Cölditz, and Colloredo at Borna; so that all three might be expected to take part in the action in the evening of the following day. The attack, accordingly, was ordered for two o'clock in the afternoon of that day; but such was the badness of the roads to the southward, from the immense multitude of artillery and chariots which had passed over them, that Colloredo and Benningsen had not then come up, and did not reach their ground, the former till four, the latter till late in the evening. The attack was, therefore, adjourned till the following morning, when the troops were ordered to be in readiness by daybreak; and no doubt was entertained of success, as the grand Allied army would then be reinforced by above fifty thousand combatants, besides those who joined Blucher and Bernadotte.<sup>1</sup>

1 Bout. 125,  
126. Jom. iv.  
464, 465.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
841, 847.

47.  
Dangerous  
state of the  
Allied affairs  
to the north  
of Leipsic.

Oct. 17.

But, although matters were thus favourable to the Allies on the ground where Napoleon and the Allied sovereigns commanded in person, to the south of Leipsic, affairs were far from being in an equally satisfactory state to the north of that town, where Blucher was opposed to Ney and Marmont. Reynier, and the other divisions of Ney's corps, had now come up from Düben, which rendered him more than a match for the army of Silesia, weakened as that noble host was by six thousand men lost on the preceding day, and the incessant fighting which it had sustained since the commencement of the campaign. A violent cavalry action on the 17th, between Arrighi's dragoons and Wassilchikoff's Cossacks, on the banks of the Partha, had only terminated to the advantage of the Allies by their bringing up the reserve hussars, who at length drove the enemy back to the very walls of

Leipsic. Every thing, therefore, on that side depended upon bringing the Prince-Royal into action; but in that quarter a most alarming degree of backwardness had become visible, which threatened the cause of the Allies with the most serious consequences. Not only had Bernadotte, in pursuance of his usual system of saving the Swedes, so successfully applied at Gross Beeren and Dennewitz, arranged the troops of his own dominions a full march in the rear of the Russians and Prussians; but instead of directing them to Halle, as he was recommended, where they would have been, if not in line with Blucher, at least not very far in his rear, he had moved the Russians only to Zörbig, while the Prussians and Swedes stretched by the Peterberg and Grobzig, so far from the decisive point as to be of no service whatever in the crisis which was approaching.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately for the Allies and the cause of European freedom, their interests were at this juncture supported, at the headquarters of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, by men whose discernment showed them where the decisive point lay, and whose moral courage rendered them equal to the task of enforcing it upon the commander. Sir Charles Stewart and General Pozzo di Borgo\* were officially

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<sup>1</sup> Lond. 160,  
161. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
136. Plotho,  
ii. 397.  
Richter, ii.  
269.

48.  
Vigorous ef-  
forts of Sir  
Charles  
Stewart to  
bring up  
Bernadotte.

\* Charles André Pozzo di Borgo was born at Pozzo di Borgo, near Ajaccio, in Corsica, on 8th March 1768, in the same year as Napoleon. His history was throughout life so intimately blended with that of Napoleon, that in the age of astrology it would have been said that they were born under the influence of the same planets, with this difference, that their respective apogees and perigees were reversed. The family of the Pozzo di Borgo, (*Puits de Village*, well of the village,) was a very ancient one in Corsica, and belonged to the native race; while that of the Buonapartes and the Salicetti was descended from the Italians, whom the revolutions of the neighbouring peninsula had, in the course of ages, brought to seek refuge in its mountain solitudes. From his earliest years young Pozzo di Borgo belonged to the national party, and was closely allied with its noble hero, Paoli, who struggled for the preservation of old institutions and national independence: the Buonapartes, with Arena and Salicetti, were connected with the Jacobin clubs, and aimed, by French interference, at the overthrow of society. In 1789, Pozzo di Borgo, then in his twenty-second year, already secretary of the noblesse of Corsica, was sent as deputy of the nobles to the National Assembly. He spoke little at the tribune, but made an eloquent oration in the interest of the Girondists, to which party he belonged, on the war with Germany on the 16th July 1792. At the termination of the Constituent Assembly he returned to Corsica, and united with Paoli in the administration of the island. France, under the administration of the Girondists, was then dreaming of a federal union of little republics; and Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo, for a short period, deemed it practicable to realise that union among their rugged mountains. The Salicettis, Arenas, and Buonapartes, on the other hand, dwelling in the cities of the plain, were associated with their ardent population, and supported a republic one and indivisible, in order to obtain the constant support of the Jacobins of Paris. The influence of those families obtained from the Convention an order for Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo to attend at the bar of the Assembly to justify their conduct, at a time when obedience to such an order was certain death. In these perilous circumstances an assembly was held at

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attached to his headquarters on the part of their respective courts, and both possessed great influence with his Royal Highness; for the former had the disbursement of the British subsidies, and the latter was the accredited diplomatist and personal favourite of Alexander. Indefatigable were the efforts which these ardent men made at this crisis to overcome the backwardness of the Prince-Royal, and bring forward his powerful force, fifty thousand strong, to the support of Blucher, who was always in the front, and might be exposed from that cause, if not adequately backed, to the most serious danger. Not only did Sir Charles personally remonstrate, in the most energetic manner, on the 14th and 15th, against the pernicious and eccentric direction which Bernadotte was

Corse, the ancient capital of the island, at which it was resolved to disregard the decree of the Convention, and continue the administration of Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo. They declared "that it was not worthy of the dignity of the Corsican people to occupy themselves with the families Arena and Buonaparte, and that they abandon them to their infamy and remorse, for having separated themselves from the national cause."

It is difficult to see, however, how Corsica could have maintained itself against its terrible neighbour; had not at this critical juncture an event occurred, which for a brief period enabled them to preserve their independence. Toulon had fallen into the hands of the Republic, and the English squadron, expelled from its spacious harbour, cast anchor before Ajaccio, in hopes of finding, in the national spirit of Corsica, some compensation for their recent disaster. Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo gladly availed themselves of this fortunate circumstance to extricate their country from the tyranny of the Jacobins, and it was immediately declared an independent state under the protection of Great Britain. Soon after an assembly was summoned to construct a constitution for the island, on the model of that of England; and on the recommendation of Paoli, Pozzo di Borgo was appointed president. Upon Admiral Elliot, afterwards Lord Minto, the governor of the island, seeing him, and remarking that he appeared young for a situation of such importance, Paoli replied, "I will answer for him; he is a young man, as skilful in directing the people as in acting firmly on the field of battle." Pozzo di Borgo accordingly was elected, and immediately applied himself with vigour to organising the institutions of his country, not upon their ancient but an improved model. This was the turning point of his history: thenceforward he entered heart and soul into the preservation of order, and the objects of the European alliance.

July 10, 1794.

The independence of Corsica under British influence, however, existed only two years. The dense urban population, thirsting for democracy, soon proved more than a match for the scattered mountaineers, attached to old institutions: the British succours were far distant, and given in a parsimonious spirit, and the island again fell under the government of France. Compelled to leave his country, Pozzo di Borgo, with Paoli, embarked on board a frigate of the English fleet, and landed at *Elba*, as if a mysterious destiny had in every point of his career linked his fate with that of Napoleon. From thence he came to London, where his capacity and information soon gained for him the confidence of Mr Pitt, who employed him in several diplomatic missions to Vienna. From thence he passed into the service of Russia, where in like manner he won the confidence of Alexander, by whom he was employed as diplomatic agent at the court of Naples, when Queen Caroline made her unfortunate essay in arms, on the eve of the battle of Austerlitz. Obligated to return by the peace of Presburg to St Petersburg, he received the rank of colonel in the army, and was attached to the Emperor's suite, in which capacity he was actively employed in the campaigns of Jena and Eylau, and was intrusted with several diplomatic missions of importance; particularly to Vienna and Constantinople. When the peace of

giving to his troops, and which had the effect of excluding them from all share in the action of the 16th; but on the morning of that day he addressed to him a written remonstrance, penned with respect but military frankness, and breathing a warm but not undeserved spirit of patriotic indignation.<sup>1</sup>\*

These efforts, which were vigorously seconded by Blucher and Pozzo di Borgo, at length produced the desired effect. The circuitous sweep, indeed, which Bernadotte had given to his troops, saved Ney from destruction, and doubled Blucher's losses on the 16th; but at length he was brought forward to his ground. On the night of

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<sup>1</sup> Lond. 162  
169.

49.

Which at  
length proves  
successful.

Tilsit again threw Russia into the French alliance, he had the prudence to request permission to travel; but in a farewell interview with Alexander he used these remarkable expressions, which subsequent events rendered prophetic:—"The alliance of your Majesty with France will not be of long duration: I know the profound dissimulation and insatiable ambition of Buonaparte. At this moment your Majesty has one arm held by Persia, and another by Turkey, while Napoleon presses on your breast. When you have loosed your hands, the weight will be more easily shaken off the breast. Adieu for a few years."

During the memorable campaign of 1809, Pozzo di Borgo was at Vienna, aiding the Austrian cabinet with his counsels and animating it by his spirit. At the peace of Vienna, after the battle of Wagram, Napoleon, aware of his weight, made it an express condition that he should be banished from the Imperial dominions as well as from Russia. To this last condition Alexander was obliged to consent; and on this occasion Pozzo wrote a noble farewell letter, resigning his appointment in the Muscovite service, adding, "The time is not far distant when your Majesty will recall me to your service." He then repaired to Constantinople, the sole route by which at that period he could reach England, and arrived in London in October 1810, when his value was immediately discerned by Lord Castlereagh, then minister of foreign affairs, as it had formerly been by Mr Pitt. His prophecy to the Czar was soon accomplished: the terrible war of 1812 broke out: Alexander recalled his faithful servant and true prophet to his side: he was sent on the way to Stockholm, where he contributed to overcome the indecision of Bernadotte, and joined the Emperor at Kalisch, as he was on the eve of signing the Grand Alliance which delivered Europe.

As soon as he arrived, Alexander admitted Pozzo di Borgo to a private interview, in which, after recalling to his recollection his prophecy, he treated him in the kindest and most confidential manner, and taking him by the arm, walked out with him in that manner at a parade of the guards. The courtiers, who had received him coldly from the recollection of his former exile, were immediately all smiles: every one, regarding his fortune as made, hastened to tender to him their congratulations. Constantly attached to the headquarters of the Czar, he shared his entire confidence, and took a prominent part in the important negotiations with Great Britain and Austria which followed. He was chosen with Sir Charles Stewart, from his known energy and decision of character, for the delicate and important task of holding Bernadotte to the charge during the campaign of Leipsic, which duty he executed with equal ability and success. He was at Alexander's side when he entered Paris: he took a leading part in Napoleon's dethronement: and was long ambassador of Russia at the court of the Tuileries, when his ancient rival at Ajaccio was an exile on the rock of St Helena.—*Personal knowledge*;—and CAPEFIGUE, *Diplomates Européens*, 124, 143; one of the ablest works of that eloquent and accomplished author.

\* These letters are very curious, and remain enduring monuments both of the tortuous policy of Bernadotte at that period, and of the clear military discernment and unflinching moral courage of the Marquis of Londonderry. At 9 A.M., on the 16th, he wrote to the Prince-Royal as follows:—"According to

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<sup>1</sup> Lond. 162,  
170. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
845,

the 16th, Bernadotte slept at Landsberg, and on the evening of the 17th he was on the heights of Breitenfeld, immediately in the rear of Blücher's army. His conduct on this occasion, as on many others during the campaign, was not owing either to want of military discernment or physical resolution, but to secret views of political ambition. He clearly foresaw, and anxiously desired, the fall of Napoleon; but he had no wish to have a hand in completing either his destruction or that of his army. He was averse to both, as much from a natural feeling of patriotic attachment to the land of his birth, as from a conviction that such a catastrophe would prove an insurmountable bar to his own ascent of the vacant throne, on which he had already set his heart.<sup>1</sup>

Considerable changes, during the night of the 17th, were made by Napoleon in the disposition of his troops. At two in the morning, seeing that no answer had been returned to the propositions he had sent through Meer-

the report of General Blücher, the enemy has quitted Dölitz. It is of the last importance, according to my ideas, that the army of your Royal Highness should move to the left behind Dölitz; the marshes and defiles render such a movement free of all risk, and your Royal Highness will then be in a situation to take a part in the approaching battle, which will be more decisive with your army and military talents. As the enemy's whole forces are in the environs of Leipsic, permit me to observe that the moments are precious. The English nation has its eye upon you: it is my duty to address you with frankness. The English nation will never believe that you are indifferent, provided the enemy is beaten, whether you take a part in the battle or not. I venture to beseech your Royal Highness, if you remain in the second line, to send forward Captain Bogue with the rocket brigade, to General Blücher, to act with the cavalry." Bernadotte, however, still hung back, and, by Blücher's desire, Sir Charles galloped to his headquarters, and found the Russians only at Landsberg; *the Prussians a march behind the Russians, and the Swedes a march behind the Prussians*. He could not obtain an interview with the Prince-Royal: but got from General Adlercrantz a promise to send forward three thousand horse next morning. Sir Charles then returned to Blücher, took part in the action, and after it was over rode back to Halle, where Bernadotte had still not arrived, and wrote to him the following laconic epistle:—"Halle, 9 P.M., 16th Oct.—I have just come from General Blücher's field of battle. I have the honour to lay before your Royal Highness the details of the action. I venture to supplicate your Royal Highness to march on Taucha the moment you receive this letter. There is not an instant to lose: your Royal Highness has pledged your word to me to do so. I must now address you as a friend. *I speak now as a soldier; and, if you do not commence your march, you will repent it as long as you live.*" To a soldier and a gentleman this was sufficient, and Bernadotte at length moved next morning, and reached his ground on the evening of the same day. He was, however, most indignant at this freedom, and the first time he saw Sir Charles afterwards, he said, "Comment, Général Stewart! quel droit avez-vous de m'écrire? Ne rappelez-vous pas que je suis Prince de Suède, *un des plus grands généraux de l'âge?* Et si vous étiez à ma place, que penseriez-vous si quelqu'un vous écrivait comme vous m'avez écrit?" The Gascons are always true to their name and character. He soon, however, recovered his good-humour; and when the Marquis and Marchioness of Londonderry visited Sweden in 1838, on their way to St Petersburg, he received them, much to his credit, with the most distinguished kindness and hospitality.—LONDONDERRY, 162, 177; *War in Germany*; and *Personal Information*.



feldt, he prepared for battle, and made the requisite contraction of the circle which his troops occupied, to enable them to withstand the prodigious force by which they were to be assailed. He had now brought up his whole reserves from Düben ; and Reynier with his Saxons, now reduced to eight thousand men, had joined the standards of Ney on the Partha. The troops effected a change of front to the left, the left wing being thrown back, and Connowitz, on the extreme right, serving as the pivot. Poniatowski remained fixed there, on the edge of the Elster ; and the whole army, now not numbering more than a hundred and fifty thousand combatants, was arranged in a semicircle, facing outwards from that point to the extreme left, which rested on the Partha to the north of Leipsic. The line, thus contracted, abandoned Wachau, Lieberwolkwitz, and the heights in their rear, the object of such fierce contention on the preceding day ; it ran from Connowitz to Probstheyda, in which last village Victor was stationed. Macdonald fell back to Holzhausen ; Lauriston at Stöteritz was a reserve to the two latter corps ; while the Imperial Guard, under Napoleon in person on the Thonberg, near the Tobacco-windmill, still occupied a central position, from which he could succour any point that might be peculiarly menaced. Bertrand remained in his old position at Lindenau, and detachments in observation merely occupied the villages to the westward of Tweinainsdorf and Milkau, round to Ney's army, which was in position immediately to the north of Leipsic on the Partha ; Reynier at Paunsdorf, opposite Taucha ; Ney at Santa Thecla ; and Oudinot at Neutzsch. Uneasy about his retreat, Napoleon repaired at three in the morning to Lindenau, where he had a conference with Bertrand, who received orders to push forward an advanced guard and occupy Weissenfels, on the road to Mayence, which was done before noon on the same day. The position of the French army around Leipsic, with its flanks secured from being turned by the Elster and the Partha, and the old walls of the town itself as a great redoubt in its centre, was undoubtedly strong, and hardly liable, if bravely defended by such a force as Napoleon's, to be forced by any masses of assailants, how great soever.<sup>1</sup> But it had a frightful defect, that

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50.

Changes in  
Napoleon's  
position dur-  
ing the night.

1 Bout. 128,  
129. Jom. iv.  
464, 466.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 137, 138.  
Vaud. i. 211,  
212. Die  
Feldzug der  
Sachsen, 317.  
Plötho, ii.  
398, 399. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
865.

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51.  
Dispositions  
of Prince  
Schwartz-  
berg for the  
attack.  
Oct. 18.

it had but one issue for so vast a multitude of men, horse, cannon, and chariots in rear: resembling thus, in a striking manner, the position of the Russians, with the Alle at their backs, in front of Friedland,\* of which Napoleon had taken such decisive advantage in the first Polish war.

Schwartzenberg, on his side, made the requisite dispositions for following up his advantages, and pressing upon the columns of the French from all sides of the narrow circle into which they had now retired. The grand army of Bohemia, and Benningsen's reserve from Poland, were formed into three columns; the right, under Benningsen's orders, composed of his own army, the corps of Klenau, and Ziethen's Prussians, was directed to advance from Gross Possnau to Holzhausen; the centre, under Barclay de Tolly, who had the corps of Kleist and Wittgenstein under his command, with the grenadiers and guards in reserve, assembled near Gossa, and was to advance straight upon Wachau; while the left, under the direction of the Prince of Hesse Homburg, consisting of Meerfeldt's and Colloredo's Austrians, his own reserve, and Lichtenstein's men, was to move forward by the edge of the Elster, from Connewitz and Mark-Klee, on Dölitz and Leipsic. To the north of Leipsic, also, the Prince-Royal and Blucher, now nearly a hundred thousand strong, had made their arrangements for a decisive engagement: the former, with the corps of Langeron, as well as his own troops, under his orders, was to cross the Partha, turn Ney's right, and force him back upon Leipsic, from the side of Taucha, and the road to Wittenberg; while Blucher, with his two remaining corps of Sacken and York, was to remain on the right bank of the Partha, and drive all before him who should remain on that side of the river. The forces of the Allies were more numerous than had ever been assembled in one field during modern times, for they mustered two hundred and eighty thousand combatants, with nearly fourteen hundred guns; and in intrinsic strength and military equipment, far exceeded any force ever collected for warlike purposes since the beginning of the world.†

1 Bout. 128,  
131. Jom. iv.  
466, 467.  
Vaud. i. 212,  
213. Kausler,  
945, 946.  
Plothe, ii.  
401, 402. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i. 865.

\* *Ante*, Chap. xlv. § 59.

† Mardonius at Plataea is said to have had 300,000 men, and the Gauls, when

At length the battle of giants commenced. The 18TH OCTOBER dawned, and the last hour of the French Empire began to toll. At nine, Napoleon took his station on the Thonberg: the enemy's columns were already approaching with rapid strides on all sides, and their heads were soon seen surmounting the hills of Wachau, and driving, like chaff before the wind, the French detachments which were stationed to retard their advance in the intermediate villages. Inexpressibly awful was the spectacle which their advance afforded to the agitated multitude who thronged the steeples of Leipsic. As far as the eye could reach, the ground was covered with an innumerable multitude of men and horses; long deep masses marked the march of the infantry; dazzling lines of light indicated the squadrons of cavalry; the glancing of the bayonets in the rays of the sun, sparkled like crests of foam on a troubled ocean; while a confused murmur, arising from the neighing of horses, the march of the columns, and the rolling of the guns, sounded like the roar of a distant cataract.

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52.

Commence-  
ment of the  
battle, and  
success of the  
Allies on  
their left.

—————" In mighty quadrate joined  
Of union irresistible; moved on  
In silence their bright legions, to the sound  
Of instrumental harmony, that breathed  
Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds,  
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause  
Of God and his Messiah. On they move,  
Indissolubly firm: nor obvious hill,  
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides  
Their perfect ranks."\*

The Allied left, under the Prince of Hesse Homburg, first came into action, and its success was brilliant and immediate; the resistance of the Poles on the banks of the Elster, under the brave Poniatowski, proud of the rank of marshal of France, worthily conferred on him the day before by the Emperor, was indeed heroic; but they were unable to withstand the superior numbers and vehement attacks of the Austrians, under Bianchi and Colloredo, and gave ground. The danger on that side was soon imminent; for the victorious Austrians, driving the Poles before them, soon passed Dölitz and Lössnig, and

they blockaded Cæsar in his lines round Alesia, had 240,000; but neither of these armies could bear any comparison, in the number of real soldiers and the military strength, with the host which fought under the Allied banners at Leipsic, which was 280,000, with 1384 pieces of cannon.

\* *Paradise Lost*, Book vi. 60.

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
418, 420.  
Bout. 130.  
131. Vaud.  
i. 214. Jom.  
iv. 470.  
Plotho, ii.  
402.

53.

Desperate  
conflict at  
Probstheyda  
in the centre.

menaced Connewitz and the suburbs of Leipsic—the only line of retreat to the army. Napoleon immediately repaired to the spot with two divisions of the Young Guard, under Oudinot, while the old, under Mortier, was stationed in the rear, in the suburbs of Leipsic. The steady countenance of these veterans restored the combat; Hesse Homburg was wounded; and though the Poles were driven back, after hard fighting, to Connewitz, the action on this side ceased to be alarming, and all Bianchi's efforts could not dislodge Poniatowski from that village, even with the aid of Giulay's corps, which Schwartzenberg despatched to his support.<sup>1</sup>

The village of Probstheyda formed the salient angle of the position occupied by the French around Leipsic, and as such it became, early in the day, the object of the most vehement contention between the opposite parties. In the first instance, the progress of the Allies in the centre was rapid: Lieberwolkwitz and Wachau, the scenes of such bloody struggles on the 16th, were abandoned after a slight combat of advanced posts; the Allied artillery was hurried forward amidst loud shouts to the summit of the hills of Wachau, and soon two hundred pieces of cannon, arrayed along the heights, began to send an iron tempest into the French columns. But meanwhile Napoleon's batteries were not idle. Sensible of the inferiority of their pieces in point of number to those of the enemy, the men endeavoured to supply the deficiency by the rapidity of their fire, and their guns were worked with extraordinary vigour. Every cannon that could be brought to bear on either side was hurried to the front; and soon eight hundred pieces of artillery played on the hostile masses, in a space of not more than half a league in breadth in the centre of the army. In the midst of this tremendous fire, Prince Augustus of Prussia and General Pirsch received orders, with Kleist's corps, to carry Probstheyda. Swiftly they moved over the intervening open space, and entered the village with such vigour, that they reached its centre before the onset could be arrested; but there they were met by Victor and Lauriston, at the head of dense masses, who combated with such resolution that they were driven back.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing daunted by this bloody repulse, Prince

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii.  
420, 421.  
Bout. 131,  
132. Jom.  
iv. 470, 471.  
Vaud. i. 214,  
215. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
871, 874.

Augustus re-formed his men, and again rushed into the village, followed by Wittgenstein's Russians and nearly the whole of Kleist's corps. Such was the vehemence of their onset, that the French were entirely expelled; the fugitives and wounded overspread the plain which extended towards Leipsic. Imposing masses at the same time displayed themselves towards Holzhausen, on the French left, and the centre seemed on the point of being forced. Napoleon instantly hastened to the spot with the remaining two divisions of the Young Guard: the steady columns made their way through the crowd of fugitives who were leaving the rear of the centre, and blocked up all the roads. Amidst the clouds of dust which obscured the view, and the cries of the combatants, which drowned even the roar of the artillery, he preserved his usual calmness and decision, and, pushing forward to the front, arrested the tumult with two battalions of the Guard, and did not return to his station beside the windmill till he had entirely expelled the enemy from the village. Again the Russians under Wittgenstein, and Benningsen's reserves were brought up to the attack, and dislodged the French: but a third time the invincible soldiers of Lauriston and Victor recovered their post, and hurled back the assailants with dreadful loss into the Allied ranks.<sup>1</sup>

On the right, Ziethen's Prussians marched against Holzhausen and Zuckelhausen, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, followed by a considerable part of Benningsen's Russians in reserve. In moving up they were charged in flank by Sebastiani's dragoons; but Pahlen's and Tschaplitz's cuirassiers speedily repulsed the attack, and drove back the enemy's horse with great loss into their own lines. At the same time, Platoff, with six thousand Cossacks, by a circuitous sweep turned the extreme left of the French on this side, and threatened the rear of Macdonald's corps. He, in consequence, abandoned Holzhausen, and fell back to Stöteritz, warmly pursued by the victorious Prussians; and the Allied sovereigns, who had now advanced their headquarters to the sheepfold of Meitsdorf, ordered an attack on that village. Such, however, was the vehemence of the fire of the French batteries of a hundred guns, posted on either side of Probstheyda,

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54.

Second  
attack on  
Probstheyda  
is repulsed by  
Napoleon in  
person.

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i. 873,  
874. Plötho,  
ii. 406.  
Fain, ii.  
419, 420.  
Bout. 131,  
132, Jom.  
iv. 470, 471.  
Vaud. i. 214.  
Lab. i. 393.

55.

Operations  
on the  
Allied right.

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<sup>1</sup> Kausler,  
948. Bout.  
132. Jom.  
iv. 471.  
Vaud. i. 215.  
Ploto, ii.  
402. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
878, 882.

56.  
The Allies  
withdraw  
their  
columns, and  
open a com-  
bined fire of  
cannon.

—which, seeing their rear thus threatened, wheeled about, and opened with terrible execution on the flank of the attacking column,—that, after having all but carried the village, it was forced to recoil, glad to seek shelter in the nearest hollows from the fearful tempest. Still further to the Allied right, Bubna's light horse, with a body of Platoff's Cossacks, pushed across the plain beyond the reach of the combatants, and opened up a communication with Bernadotte's outposts, which soon made their appearance from the direction of Taucha: united, they fell upon the rear of the Würtemberg brigade of Normann, which straightway abandoned the colours of France, and ranged itself in the ranks of the Fatherland.<sup>1</sup>

Schwartzenberg, finding that the resistance of the enemy to the south of Leipsic was so obstinate, and that the assault of the villages was attended with such a fearful loss of life, and having received information of decisive success to the north, which would soon render the enemy's position untenable, ordered his columns over the whole semicircle to the south, to seek refuge in the nearest hollows from the dreadful effect of the enemy's batteries; and for the remainder of the day confined his attack on that side to another and more powerful arm. The whole cannon of the grand army, amounting to above eight hundred pieces, were brought forward to the front, arranged in the form of a vast semicircle two leagues in length, from Lösnitz by the ridges of Wachau towards Holzhausen; and during the remainder of the day they kept up an incessant and most destructive fire on the enemy's columns. The French batteries in that direction, which numbered above five hundred pieces, answered with unconquerable vigour; but, independent of their inferiority in point of number, the position which the Allied guns occupied was far superior, they being stationed in great part on the heights commanding the whole plain, which the enemy had occupied on the preceding day, while their semicircular position caused their concentric fire to fall with redoubled severity on the dense and close masses of Napoleon's forces, the fire of whose batteries, on the other hand, spreading like a fan towards a wide circumference, was attended, comparatively speaking, with very little effect.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Odel. ii. 30,  
31. Vaud. i.  
215. Bout.  
133. Fain,  
ii. 428.  
Ploto, i. 406,  
407. Feldz.  
der Sachsen,  
322.

Galled beyond endurance by the frightful discharge, Lauriston's and Victor's troops repeatedly, and almost involuntarily, rushed out of Probstheyda, and advanced with heroic resolution against the hostile batteries; but, as soon as they came within the range of grapeshot, the heads of the dense columns were swept away, and the broken remains recoiled, horror-struck, behind the shelter of the houses. For four terrible hours this awful scene lasted; the Allied batteries continuing till nightfall, like a girdle of flame, their dreadful fire, while the French masses, devoted to death, still closed their ranks as they wasted away, but with unconquerable resolution maintained their ground. Close to Napoleon himself twelve guns were dismounted in a few minutes; from the ranks which immediately surrounded him, some thousand wounded were carried back to Leipsic. In Probstheyda, Vial, Rochambeau, and several generals of inferior note, were killed, and great numbers wounded during this dreadful interval. But still their columns stood firm beneath the tempest, exhibiting a sublime example of human valour rising superior to all the storms of fate.<sup>1</sup>

While this terrible conflict was going on to the south of Leipsic, Ney and Marmont had to maintain their ground against still more overwhelming odds on the banks of the Partha. At ten in the morning, Blucher, in pursuance of the plan agreed on, crossed that river, and marched to join the Prince-Royal, who, on his part, broke up at eight from Breitenfeld, and passed at Taucha and Mockau. Their united force, when they were both assembled, was little short of ninety thousand combatants, exceeding by fully forty thousand men the troops which Ney could oppose to them; and they moved direct upon Leipsic by the right bank of the river. The French general, finding himself thus outnumbered, adopted the same change of front which Napoleon had followed to the south of Leipsic, and drawing back his men to Schönfeld, Sellershausen, and Stuntz, extended across to Reynier's corps, which was established at Paunsdorf. Thus the whole French army was now arranged in a circle around the city, having its right, under Poniatowski, resting on the Pleisse at Connewitz,<sup>2</sup> and the extreme left, under

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57.  
Heroic resistance  
of the  
French.

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
428, 429.  
Odel. ii. 30,  
31. Vand. i.  
215. Bout.  
133, 134.  
Feldz. der  
Sachsen, 323,  
324.

58.  
Operations of  
Blucher and  
Bernadotte  
against Ney.

<sup>2</sup> Kausler,  
950. Bout.  
135. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
141. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
881, 882.

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59.

Defection of  
the Saxons,  
and retreat of  
the French  
centre and  
right to the  
north of  
Leipsic.

Marmont, at the confluence of the Partha and Elster, below the gate of Rosenthal.

The first incident which occurred on this side was of ominous import, and depressed the French as much as it elated the Allies. A brigade of Saxon cavalry, as soon as the Russians approached the heights of Heiter Bleik, where it was stationed, instead of resisting, passed over to the Allied ranks. This example was speedily followed by two Saxon brigades of foot, with their whole artillery, consisting of twenty-two pieces; and the Würtemberg horse of Normann, as already noticed, immediately after went over also to the enemy. This unparalleled event caused great consternation, as well it might, in Reynier's corps; for not only were they weakened, when already inferior in force, by fully eight thousand men, but such was the exasperation of the Saxon cannoniers, that they pointed their guns, immediately after going over, against the French lines, and tore in pieces the ranks of their former comrades by a point-blank discharge. The French general, reduced to the single division Durutte, and threatened on the right by Bubna from the Bohemian army, and on the left by Bulow from that of the Prince-Royal, was immediately compelled to fall back to Sellershausen, almost close to Leipsic. Ney, informed of the catastrophe, hastened to reinforce Reynier by Delmas' division of his own corps; while Marmont, to keep abreast of the retrograde movement in other points, withdrew his troops in a similar degree, with the exception of his extreme left, which still stood firm at Schönfeld.<sup>1</sup>

The Allied troops, excited to the greatest degree by these favourable circumstances, now pressed forward at all points to encircle the enemy, and force them back, at the point of the bayonet, into the suburbs of Leipsic; while the French, roused to the highest pitch of indignation by the defection of their Allies, made the most desperate and heroic resistance. No sooner was Napoleon informed of the defection of the Saxons, and that Schönfeld, almost a suburb of Leipsic, was threatened, than, feeling the vital importance of preserving that city as his only line of retreat, he hastened with the cuirassiers of Nansouty, and a division of the Young Guard, to the menaced point. It was full time that succour should

<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
411, 472.  
Bout. 136,  
137. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
142. Lond.  
172. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
884, 887.  
Plotho, ii.  
411.

60.  
Napoleon's  
effort on that  
side is  
defeated.



arrive ; for when these veterans came up, Durutte and Delmas had been driven back close to the town ; the Swedish troops had penetrated to Kuhl-Garten, on the very edge of the walls ; while Langeron, furiously assaulting Schönfeld, had three times penetrated into that village, and as often been dislodged by the heroic courage of Marmont's men. Nansouty and the guards were immediately pushed forward by Durutte in the direction where there was a sort of chasm, filled up only by a cordon of light troops, between the extreme right of the army of Bohemia under Bubna, and the extreme left of the Prince-Royal under Bulow. This powerful corps rapidly made its way, almost unresisted, in at the opening ; but before it had advanced far, it was assailed with such vigour on the right by Bubna, and on the left by Bulow, supported by the English rocket brigade, under the able direction of Captain Bogue, that it was forced to retire, after Delmas had been slain, with very heavy loss.\* At the same time, Schönfeld was vehemently attacked by Count Langeron, and as gallantly defended by Marmont : five times did the Russians penetrate in with irresistible vigour, and five times were they driven out by the devoted courage of the French ; Marmont's aide-de-camp was struck down by his side ; General Compans was wounded—General Frederick killed, in this terrible struggle. At length, at six at night, it was carried a sixth time amidst terrific cheers, and remained finally in the hands of the Russians ; while four thousand of their bravest soldiers and an equal number of its intrepid defenders lay dead, or weltering in their blood, in its streets.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the exhaustion of both parties by the long continuance of this mortal struggle, that neither for the remainder of the day were able to undertake any considerable operations. Gradually, however, and almost insensibly, the Allies gained ground on every side.

\* This was the first occasion that this new and most formidable implement of modern warfare was brought into action. Such was its effect upon the enemy, that a solid square of French infantry, upon the flank of which it opened its fire, surrendered in a few minutes. Hardly was this brilliant success achieved, when the commander of the brigade, Captain Bogue, a noble and patriotic officer, struck on the breast by a cannon-ball, expired. It was first introduced in the Peninsula at the passage of the Adour in February 1814.—*Vide* LONDONDERRY, 172.

<sup>1</sup> Bout. 137,  
138. Jom.  
iv. 474, 475.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
142. Lond.  
172, 173.  
Krausler, 950.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
896, 897, 900.

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61.

Close of the  
battle, and  
commence-  
ment of  
Napoleon's  
retreat.

Bulow, following up his success against Durutte and Nansouty, carried the villages of Stuntz and Sellershausen, and drove the French on the north-east back under the very walls of Leipsic; while Sacken attacked the suburb of Rosenthal, from which he was only repelled by the devoted valour of Dombrowski's Poles and Arrighi's dragoons. But the near approach of the enemy on all sides now made it evident to Napoleon, that the position of Leipsic had become untenable, and dispositions were made for a retreat. He had early in the forenoon reinforced Bertrand, at Lindenau, with a considerable part of the reserves at Leipsic; and that general, driving Giulay before him, had succeeded in opening the road to Weissenfels, so that the principal line of their retreat was secured. Towards evening the carriages and baggage of the army began to defile in that direction; and Blucher, observing the long files of chariots which filled the highway to France, immediately sent intimation to Schwartzenberg that the enemy was about to retreat, and despatched York's corps, which had been kept in reserve during the day, to move upon Halle in order to anticipate his columns upon the left of the Saale.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Plotho, ii.  
414. Bout.  
138, 139.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
144. Fain,  
Kausler, 951,  
952.  
Richter ii.  
299, 300.

62.  
Night council  
held by  
Napoleon on  
the field.

Night came, more terrible even than day after such a conflict; for with it was brought the memory of the past, and the anticipation of the future. To the incessant roll of musketry, and the roar of two thousand cannon, succeeded a silence yet more awful, interrupted only by a casual shot from the sentries as they paced their rounds, and the hollow murmur which, over a field of such vast extent, arose from the cries of the horses and the groans of the wounded. Soon the bivouacs were spread, and the heavens, in the whole circumference of the horizon, were illuminated by the ruddy glow of innumerable watch-fires. Silent and sad, Napoleon's marshals and generals assembled around him: little was said in the deliberations which succeeded; the position of the enemy, the dreadful circle of bivouac flames which surrounded them, the dead and the dying who environed them on every side, told but too plainly how near and imminent the danger had become. Sorbier and Dulauiy, the commanders of the artillery, were requested to report on the condition of the army's ammunition. They stated that

above two hundred thousand cannon-shot had been discharged during the battle, and to renew it was impossible without thirty or forty thousand fresh troops, and some hundred caissons of ammunition. Neither could be obtained; for the last sabre and bayonet had been brought up on the preceding day; the grand park of ammunition had been deposited in Torgau, which was no longer accessible, and Magdeburg and Erfurth were the nearest depots of provisions. During this eventful conference, Napoleon, overcome with fatigue, fell asleep in the chair on which he sat; his hands rested negligently folded on his breast, and his generals, respecting the respite of misfortune, preserved a profound silence. Suddenly, at the end of a quarter of an hour, he awoke, and casting a look of astonishment on the circle which surrounded him, exclaimed—"Am I awake, or is it a dream?" Soon recollecting, however, what had happened, he sent a message to the King of Saxony, announcing his intention to retreat, and leaving it to him either to follow his fortunes, or remain where he was, and conclude a separate peace with the Allies.<sup>1</sup>

No words can describe the state of horror and confusion in which the inhabitants of Leipsic were kept during the whole night which followed the battle. The prodigious multitude of wounded who had been brought in during the day, had filled to overflowing every house it contained; the maimed and the dying were lying, without either bandages for their wounds or covering for their bodies, in the streets; while the incessant rolling of artillery waggons and caissons, on every avenue leading to Lindenau, the cries of the drivers, the neighing of the horses as the wheels of the carriages were locked together, and the continued march of the columns, kept every eye open, in that scene of unutterable woe, during the whole night. At eight, Napoleon left his bivouac on the Thonberg, and took up his quarters in the hotel of Prussia. His horses were ordered to be ready to start at a moment's notice; but he himself sat up till daylight, with Berthier, Maret, and Caulaincourt, receiving reports and dictating orders. The King of Saxony, amidst the wreck of his fortunes, was chiefly inconsolable from the defection of his troops during the battle, and repeatedly requested

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<sup>1</sup> Odel. ii.  
34, 35.  
Fain, ii. 430,  
431.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
906, 907.

63.  
Dreadful  
state of  
Leipsic  
during the  
night.

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.

432, 433.

Odel. ii. 3

37. Die

Grosse

Chron. i.

908, 915.

64.

French dis-  
positions for  
a retreat on  
the following  
morning.

counsel from Napoleon how he should act in the crisis. But the Emperor had the generosity to leave him altogether unfettered in the course he was to pursue; and more than once expressed his admiration of the constancy of a prince who showed himself the same now, when surrounded by disaster, as when he inscribed on his triumphal arches the words, "To Napoleon, the grateful Frederick Augustus."<sup>1</sup>

Early on the morning of the 19th, the Allied generals made preparations for a general attack on Leipsic. By daybreak the French army was in full retreat on all sides. Victor and Augereau, with the whole five corps of cavalry, defiled across the suburb of Lindenau, and issued forth over the chaussée which traversed the marshes of the Elster. But this was the sole issue for the army: one single bridge over that river was alone to receive the prodigious concourse of soldiers and carriages; for no orders to form other bridges had been given, excepting one of wood, which speedily gave way under the multitude by which it was thronged. Reynier, with the division Durutte, which alone remained to him, was charged with the defence of the suburb of Rosenthal; Ney withdrew his troops into the eastern suburbs; while the corps of Lauriston, Macdonald, and Poniatowski, entered the town and took a position behind the barriers of the south. They were destined to the honourable post of the rear-guard; but, though the two former still numbered twenty-five thousand combatants, the Poles had been reduced, by their two days' bloody fighting on the banks of the Elster, to two thousand seven hundred men.\* The total loss of the French army, in the two preceding days, had been fully forty thousand men; but nearly sixty thousand were still in Leipsic, besides an equal number who were defiling on the road to France: the barriers were all strongly palisaded; the adjacent walls and houses loopholed; and such a force, defending house by house the suburbs of the city so strengthened, could certainly, it was hoped,<sup>2</sup> make good the post till the

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii.  
433. Kaus-  
ler, 852.

Odel. ii. 38,

39. Vaud. i.

219.

Die Grosse

Chron. i.

913, 914.

\* "Prince," said Napoleon to Poniatowski, "you will defend the suburb of the south." "Sire," replied he, "I have few followers left." "What then?" rejoined Napoleon, "you will defend it with what you have!" "Ah! Sire," replied the descendant of the Jagellons, "we are all ready to die for your majesty."—FAIN, ii. 434.

evacuation of the ammunition waggons and cannon was effected.

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No sooner were the Allied troops made aware of the preparations in the French army for a retreat, than a universal cry of joy burst from the ranks; the whole army, almost by an involuntary movement, stood to their arms, and loudly demanded to be led on to the assault. The Allied sovereigns hastened to profit by this universal burst of enthusiasm, and their dispositions were promptly made. Sacken advanced against the suburb of Halle, supported by Langeron as a reserve. Bulow prepared to storm the barriers of Hinter-Thor, and Kuhl-Garten Thor, on the north; Woronzoff was to move against the barrier of Grimma, on the north-east; while Benningsen and the advanced columns of the grand army assaulted the Sand, Windmühlen, and Munz barriers, on the east and south. A prodigious multitude of artillery waggons and chariots obstructed the approaches to the town in that direction; and the French troops, lining all the walls, gardens, enclosures, and windows of the suburbs, were evidently preparing for a desperate resistance. On the other hand, the Allied columns, flushed with victory and burning with enthusiasm, pushed rapidly forward with inexpressible ardour. The arrangements of Trachenberg had been executed to the letter: gradually and skilfully contracting the circle within which the enemy's movements were circumscribed, they were at length preparing to meet at the appointed rendezvous, in the centre of his camp.<sup>1</sup>

65.  
Dispositions  
of the Allies  
for the  
assault of  
Leipsic.

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
919. Plotho,  
ii. 416, 417.  
Better, i. 189.  
Bout. 143,  
144. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
148, 149.  
Kriegs-  
othek, ii.  
460.

Before the assault commenced, a deputation from the magistrates of Leipsic waited on the Emperor Alexander, beseeching him to spare the city the horrors with which it was menaced if it were carried by open force; and, at the same time, a flag of truce arrived from MacDonald, offering to surrender all that remained of the Saxon troops, with the town, if the French garrison were permitted to retire with their artillery unmolested. This proposal, which would in effect have secured the retreat of half the French army, was of course rejected, and the troops moved on to the attack. Meanwhile Napoleon, at ten o'clock, went to pay a farewell visit to the King of Saxony. He was received with the accustomed etiquette,

66.  
Napoleon's  
last interview  
with the  
King of  
Saxony, and  
his departure  
from Leipsic.

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and conducted into the apartment of the Queen, where he remained a quarter of an hour, endeavouring to console the aged monarch in his misfortunes: at length, hearing the rattle of musketry, both on the side of the suburb of Taucha and Grimma, he bade him adieu, and, mounting his horse, set off. In the first instance, he directed his course towards the gate of Ranstadt, which leads into the suburb of Lindenau; but when he arrived there, the crowd of horsemen, carriages, and foot soldiers was so prodigious, that even the authority of the Emperor's attendants could not clear a passage through them, and he was obliged to retrace his steps. He then returned through the centre of the city, issued on the opposite side by the gate of St Peter, where the bullets were already falling around him, rode round the boulevards, and again reached Ranstadt, by making the entire circuit of the city. There, however, new dangers awaited him; for the confusion of carriages, artillery, and chariots in the streets of the suburb was such, that to penetrate the mass was impossible; while the rapid approach of the enemy, whose deafening cheers were already heard above the roar of the musketry, rendered the moments precious, and instant escape indispensable. In this extremity, one of the citizens pointed out a lane by which he got into a garden, by the back-door of which he escaped out upon the banks of the Elster, reached the chaussée beyond the suburb, and hastened across the marshes to Lindenau. Had it not been for that casual discovery, he would undoubtedly have been made prisoner.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse Chron. i. 917, 918. Odel. ii. 333, Note and 41. Fain, ii. 439, 440. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 149.

67. Leipzig is carried on all sides, after a vigorous resistance.

Meanwhile the Allied columns were pressing in on all sides; and the tumult in the interior of the city was such, that it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by the most energetic efforts on the part of Poniatowski, Lauriston, and Macdonald, who were charged with the maintenance of the post as long as possible, that any degree of order could be preserved in the defence. Despairing of the possibility of carrying off their innumerable artillery waggons and chariots, the French set fire to three hundred which were in park before the Dresden gate; and the sight of the flames and sound of the explosion, by rendering it certain that the enemy intended to evacuate the place, redoubled the ardour of the

Allied troops. The resistance, however, was beyond expectation vigorous. Sacken was twice repulsed from the Halle gate beyond the Partha, and only succeeded at length in forcing his way in by the aid of Langeron's corps, and the sacrifice of almost the whole regiment of Archangel. Still the arch over the Partha and the inner suburb were to be carried; but the Russians crossed the bridge in the face of two heavy guns pouring forth grape-shot, and rushing down the main street, commenced a murderous warfare with the French, who were firing from the windows and tops of the houses. At the same time an obstinate conflict was going on at the barrier of Hinter-Thor, where Bulow, supported by six Swedish battalions, after a furious conflict, at length forced the gate, and commenced a guerilla warfare with the French at the windows and in the houses. The assailants, however, were now pouring in on all sides, and further resistance was unavailing. Woronzoff, at the head of several Russian battalions, forced the barrier of Grimma; Krasowski stormed that of the hospital; while Benningsen and the advanced guard of the grand army carried those of Sand, Windmühlen, and Pegau, looking to the south. On all sides the Allied troops poured like a furious torrent into the city—the very steeples shaking with their hurrahs—bearing down all opposition, and driving before them an enormous mass of soldiers, carriages, artillery, and waggons, which, with the rearguard every where yet bravely fighting, was rolled slowly onwards towards the west, like a huge monster, bleeding at every pore, but still unsubdued.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse Chron. i. 925, 927. Ploto, ii. 42. Bout. 143, 146. Vaud. i. 221. Jom. iv. 480, 481. Fain, ii. 441.

At this dreadful moment the great bridge of Lindenau, the only remaining passage over the Elster, was blown up with a frightful explosion. The corporal charged with the mine which had been run under it by orders of Napoleon, hearing the loud hurrahs on all sides, and seeing some of the enemy's tirailleurs approaching in the gardens of the suburbs on either hand, naturally conceived that the French troops had all passed and the baggage only remained, and that the time was therefore come to fire the train, in order to stop the pursuit of the Allies. He accordingly applied the match; the arch was blown into the air, and the passage stopped; while the only

68.  
Blowing up of the bridge over the Elster, and surrender of the French rearguard.

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other bridge over the river, hastily and imperfectly constructed, had shortly before sunk under the weight of the crowds who thronged to it. A shriek of horror, more terrible than even the loudest cries of battle, burst from the dense multitude which crowded to the edge of the chasm, when they found the arch destroyed. The ranks immediately broke; the boldest threw themselves into the river, where a few escaped across, but the greater part perished in the deep and muddy channel. Macdonald by great exertions succeeded in reaching the brink, and, plunging in, swam his horse across and escaped. Poniatowski also reached the side, and spurred his horse on; but the gallant charger, exhausted with fatigue, reeled as he strove to mount the opposite bank, and fell back on his noble rider, who perished in the water. Lauriston, Reynier, and twenty other generals, with fifteen thousand soldiers, were made prisoners; besides twenty-three thousand sick and wounded who lay in the hospitals and private houses. Two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, nine hundred chariots and ammunition waggons, an incalculable quantity of baggage, the King of Saxony, two generals of corps, seven generals of divisions, twelve of brigade, and thirty thousand other prisoners, constituted the trophies, during the three days, of a battle in which the total loss of the French was upwards of sixty thousand men. The loss of the Allies was also immense; it amounted to eighteen hundred officers, and forty-five thousand private soldiers, killed and wounded, in the three days' combat: a prodigious sacrifice, but one which, great as it was, humanity has no cause to regret, for it delivered Europe from French bondage, and the world from revolutionary aggression.<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Richter, ii. 323.  
Bout. 146, 149. Odel. ii. 39, 41.  
Jom. iv. 479, 481. Fain, ii. 442, 443.  
Vaud. i. 222.  
Lond. 174, 175.  
Plottho, ii. 422. Danilefski, 234.

\* The following is the exact proportion in which the total loss was divided between the different powers whose troops were engaged, and it affords a pretty fair criterion of the degree in which the weight of the contest fell upon them respectively :—

	Generals.	Officers.	Non-Com.	Officers and Privates.
Russians,	18	864	.	21,740
Prussians,	2	520	.	14,950
Austrians,	1	399	.	8,000
Swedes,	.	10	.	300
	21	1793		44,990
				1,793
				21
				46,804

KAUSLER, 952; and *Die Grosse Chronik*, i. 937.



At two o'clock the carnage ceased at all points ; the rattle of musketry was no longer heard, and a distant roar in all directions alone indicated that the waves of this terrible tempest were gradually sinking to rest. But what pen can paint the scene which the interior of the city now exhibited ? Grouped together in wild confusion, lay piles of the dead and heaps of the dying ; overturned artillery caissons, broken guns, pillaged baggage waggons, and dejected prisoners, were to be seen beside the exulting bands of the victors, and dense columns of the Allies, who in admirable order forced their way through the throng, and amidst cheers that made the very welkin ring, moved steadily forward towards the principal square of the city. On the side of the suburb of Machranstadt, in particular, the frightful accumulation of wounded fugitives, and as yet unwounded but captive warriors, recalled the awful scene of the passage of the Beresina. Amidst this unparalleled scene, the Allied sovereigns, at the head of their respective troops, made their entrance into the city. The Emperors of Russia and Austria, with the King of Prussia, surrounded by their illustrious generals and brilliant staffs, came by the barriers on the south, the Prince-Royal of Sweden by those on the east, and all met in the great square. At this heart-stirring sight, the enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds : all felt as if themselves and all dear to them had escaped from death. The city resounded with acclamations ; handkerchiefs waved from every window, merry chimes rang from every steeple ; while tears, more eloquent than words, rolling over almost every cheek, told that the tyrant was struck down, and Germany delivered.<sup>1</sup>

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69.

Entrance of  
the Allied  
sovereigns  
into Leipsic.

Oct. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Richter, ii.  
323. Plotho,  
ii. 421.  
Lond. 173,  
174. Lab. i.  
413. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
932, 934.

—Great part of the French military writers, following the example of Napoleon's official account in the *Moniteur*, have ascribed the catastrophe of the 19th entirely to the accidental blowing up of the bridge by the corporal on guard, before the prescribed time. It is evident, however, that a single bridge could never have permitted so vast a mass as fifteen thousand soldiers, two hundred and fifty guns, and eight hundred chariots, to defile across in less than an hour, especially when the enemy were pressing the rear of the mass vigorously on all sides ; and in the confusion of such a multitude of stragglers to get forward, with the musketry and cheers of the victors approaching on all sides, the passage would necessarily be speedily choked. This is, accordingly, admitted by the more judicious of the eye-witnesses in the French ranks :—"Du reste, ceux qui furent coupés seraient de même tombés entre les mains de l'ennemi. Sans cet accident, l'impossibilité de sortir autrement que par l'étroit passage d'une seule porte, les eût également livrés aux Alliés, qui avaient toute facilité de passer l'Elster sur d'autres points."—ODELEBEN, *Témoin Oculaire*, ii. 41.

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## CHAPTER LXXXII.

### DELIVERANCE OF GERMANY.

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1.  
Commence-  
ment of  
Napoleon's  
retreat  
towards the  
Rhine.

WHILE these scenes, outstripping even the splendour of oriental conception, were passing in the city of Leipsic, the French army, sad, disorganised, and dejected, was wending its way towards Machranstadt. The Emperor, after passing the last bridge, that of the mill of Lindenau, ascended to the first floor of the windmill to examine the state of the army; but there his exhaustion was such that he fell asleep, and slept profoundly for some time, amidst the distant roar of the cannon at Leipsic, and the din of horsemen, guns, and foot-soldiers, who hurried in a tumultuous torrent past the base of the edifice. Wakened by the explosion of the bridge, on the other side of the marshes, he hastily arranged some guns in battery, to guard against an immediate attack; but, finding he was not pursued, and having learned the real nature of the catastrophe, he continued his course more leisurely to Machranstadt, where the whole Guard had already arrived, and where headquarters were established for the night. But it was at length apparent how much the fatigues and calamities they had undergone had weakened the authority of the Emperor, and dissolved the discipline of the army. The troops, with feelings imbittered by misfortune, marched in sullen and moody desperation. No cheers were heard on the approach of the Emperor: pillage and rapine were universal: the bonds of discipline, even in the Guard itself, were relaxed; and the officers appeared to have lost at once the power and the inclination to stop the disorder which prevailed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
444. Odel. i.  
43, 44.

On the side of the Allies, a very considerable disloca-

tion of the immense force which had combated at Leipsic immediately took place. Bernadotte with the Swedes, and a considerable part of his army, as well as Benning-sen's force, moved towards Hamburg, where the presence of Davoust, with a powerful corps, both required observation and promised an important acquisition. Klenau was detached towards Dresden, to aid in the blockade of St Cyr, who, with thirty-five thousand men, was now altogether cut off, and might be expected speedily to surrender. Blucher, with the corps of Langeron and Sacken, moved after the French on the great road to Mayence, and reached Schkeuditz the same night. York was advanced to Halle, and Giulay with his Austrians marched on Pegau; but the great body of the Allied army, worn out with its toils, remained in the neighbourhood of Leipsic. These movements, and in particular the speedy removal of Bernadotte from the headquarters of the Allied sovereigns to a separate, but yet important command, were recommended not less by their military importance than by political considerations of yet greater weight. The Grand Alliance, though hitherto faithful to itself, and prosperous beyond what the most sanguine could have anticipated, was composed of materials which, when the pressure of common danger was removed, could hardly be expected to draw cordially together. Bernadotte, in particular, could not be an object of very warm interest to the Emperor Francis, by whom his insults at Vienna, fourteen years before, when ambassador of the Directory, were far from being forgotten;\* his backwardness, especially in the employment of the Swedish troops, during the whole campaign, was well known at headquarters; and he himself, as he admits, felt that he was in a false position, and that he would be better at a distance from the scene of French carnage and humiliation.<sup>1†</sup>

The funeral of Prince Poniatowski terminated the last scene of this bloody drama. Victors and vanquished vied with each other in striving to do honour to the hero, who,

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2.  
Movements  
of the Allied  
troops after  
the battle.

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
449, 450.  
Mém. de  
Charles Jean  
ii. 100.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
947, 950.

\* *Ante*. Chap. xxv. § 138.

† "The Prince-Royal lost no time in quitting Leipsic, and moved in the direction of Hamburg. The fact is, that at Leipsic he was in a false position. The sight of every dead body, of every wounded man, of every French prisoner, awakened in his breast the most cruel feelings."—*Mémoires de Charles Jean*, ii. 100.

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3.  
Funeral of  
Prince Poniatowski.  
Oct. 20.

faithful to his country and his oaths, exhibited, amidst the general defection of Europe, the glorious example of unconquerable firmness and unshaken fidelity. After bravely combating at the head of his heroic but wasted band of followers, in the suburbs of Leipsic, to retard the advance of the Allies, he was retiring to the banks of the Pleisse, still keeping up a desperate resistance, when an explosion was heard, and the cry arose that the bridge was blown up. "Gentlemen," said he to the officers around him, drawing his sword, "it now behoves us to die with honour." At the head of this gallant band he made his way, though severely wounded, through a column of the Allies which strove to intercept his retreat, and reached the banks of the Pleisse, which he succeeded in passing by dismounting from his horse. Exhausted with fatigue and loss of blood he mounted another, and, seeing no other possibility of escape, plunged into the deep stream of the Elster, and by great exertions reached the other side. In striving, however, to mount the opposite bank, the hind feet of the horse became entangled in the mud; it fell backward, and the exhausted chief sunk in the water to rise no more. His funeral was celebrated with extraordinary pomp by the Allied sovereigns, who hastened to do honour to a warrior whose military career had been unsullied, and who, in the last extremity, preferred death to surrender. But a still more touching testimony to his worth was borne by the tears of the Poles, who crowded round his bier, and anxiously strove to touch the pall which covered the remains of the last remnant of their royal line, and the last hope of their national independence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lab. i. 409, 410. Norvins, Portefuille de 1813, ii. 420, 421.

4.  
March of the  
French army  
to Weissenfels.  
Oct. 20.

On the day following his dreadful defeat, Napoleon arrived at Weissenfels. In passing over the plain of Lützen, the soldiers cast a melancholy look on the theatre of their former glory, and many shed tears at the sad reverse of which it exhibited so striking a monument. What had availed them the efforts made, the sacrifices endured, the blood shed, since that heroic combat had been maintained? Where were now the young hearts which then beat high, the glittering hopes that were then formed, the ardent visions which then floated before them "in life's morning march, when their bosoms were young?"

Before the blood-stained environs of Kaia and Starsiedel, defiled, in wild confusion, the tumultuous array of a beaten, dejected, and half-famished army: three-fourths of those who there had fought so bravely for the independence of France had since perished, or were now captives; the few that remained, more like a funeral procession than a warlike array, passed on pensive and silent; they envied the lot of those who had fallen, for they would not witness the degradation of France.

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“ The boast of chivalry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Await alike the inevitable hour—  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave ! ”

The Old Guard halted at Rippach, near the spot where Bessières had been slain the day before the battle of Lützen, and there Napoleon experienced a momentary gratification in seeing a column of five thousand Austrian prisoners, with all the standards taken at Dresden, defile before him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. ii. 44,  
47. Fain, ii.  
452. Bout.  
149, 150.

But this enjoyment was of short duration. As the corps and regiments, in utter disorder and for the most part mingled together, crowded past, it became painfully evident that all the Germans had left their colours; several even of the Polish regiments had passed over to the enemy; of Poniatowski's followers, only six hundred foot soldiers, and fifteen hundred horsemen remained, and they had engaged to abide by the Emperor's standards only for eight days more. Already the Allies were pressing the rear of the army: Sacken's cavalry, under Wasilchikoff, had made two thousand prisoners; and the great road being cut off by Giulay, who from Pegau had moved on Naumburg, it became necessary to throw bridges over the Saale, in order to gain, by a cross march, the other highway at Freiburg. Such was the emotion of Bertrand, who received the Emperor at Weissenfels, and there first became acquainted, from the confusion of the columns, with the magnitude of the disaster that had been sustained, that he shed tears, and openly besought him to hasten forward, even if it were alone, to Erfurth and Mayence, and preserve in his person the fortunes of France.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>5.</sup> Great defection that appears in the ranks of his Allies in Napoleon's army.

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii.  
452, 453.  
Bout. 150.  
Odel. ii. 44,  
47. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
152.

On the day following, the retreat was continued in the

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6.  
Pursuit of  
the Allies to  
Freiburg.

Oct. 21.

direction of Freiburg ; but as they could not reach that place, the Emperor passed the night in a cabin on the road side, only nine feet square. Blucher and Sacken, continuing the pursuit, arrived the same day at Weissenfels, and immediately set about the construction of new bridges in lieu of the wooden ones over which the French had passed, which had been destroyed. Burning with anxiety to overtake the enemy, the Prussian hussars pushed on the moment the passage was practicable, and came up with them at the passage of the Unstrut at Freiburg, where, after a sharp conflict, the rearguard was overthrown, with the loss of a thousand prisoners, eighteen guns, and an immense quantity of ammunition and baggage. On the same day, Giulay had a more serious affair with the enemy at the defile of Rösen. That position, which is extremely strong towards Naumburg, offers scarcely any obstacles to an enemy advancing from the left of the Saale. Bertrand, accordingly, without difficulty dislodged the enemy from it ; and once master of the defile, its strength in the other direction enabled him easily to maintain himself in it against the repeated attacks of the Austrian corps. The passage of the Unstrut at Freiburg, however, evinced in striking colours the disorganised state of the army. Such was the accumulation of cannon and chariots on the opposite hill, that Napoleon's carriages were unable to get through, and he himself was obliged to alight, and make his way on foot, which he did with extreme difficulty, through the throng. When the enemy's guns began to play on the dense mass, the most frightful disorder ensued ; every one rushed headlong towards the bridges, and the bullets began to whistle over the head of Napoleon himself. Finding that he could no longer be of any service, he calmly turned aside the favourite bay horse which he had mounted, and penetrating through several narrow and difficult defiles, reached Eckartsberg, where he passed the night in the same house from whence, six months before, he had set out, radiant with hope, to try his fortune at the head of a brilliant host on the Saxon plains. Through the whole night, the army, like a furious torrent, never ceased to roll along in wild confusion, and with dissonant cries,<sup>1</sup> under the windows of the apartment in which the

<sup>1</sup> Plotho, ii. 427, 432. Die Grosse Chron. i. 950, 952. Fain, ii. 457, 458. Odel. ii. 50, 55. Vaud. i. 22, 24.

Emperor slept, where all was still and mournful as the grave.

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7.

Napoleon  
arrives at  
Erfurth,  
where Murat  
leaves him.

During these days, the greater part of the Allied army marched by the main road through Naumburg and Jena; and passing Weimar, took post on the road to Erfurth, near Nohra, while the army of the Prince-Royal continued its march by Merseburg, in the direction of Cassel. In this way, the latter repeated exactly the pursuit of the grand army by Kutusoff, on the parallel line of march from Malaroslawitz to Krasnoi; and contenting themselves with harassing the rear of the French army by the army of Silesia, compelled them, by this able disposition, to recoil on the wasted line of their former advance.

Oct. 22.

On the 22d, the French retreated with such expedition over the great plains which stretched from the neighbourhood of Eckartsberg to Erfurth, that even the Cossacks were unable to overtake them; and on the following day they reached the latter town, where fortified citadels gave a feeling of security to the army, while the distribution of provisions from extensive magazines assuaged the pangs of hunger which were now so severely felt.

Oct. 23.

Murat there quitted Napoleon, and bent his course towards his own dominions. The pretext assigned for this departure was threatened disturbances in his kingdom, and the necessity of providing for its defence amid the dangers with which Italy would soon be menaced. But though these reasons were plausible, and not altogether without foundation, his real motives were very different.

A secret correspondence had commenced with Metternich: and the King of Naples, in the hope of preserving his crown in the general wreck, was preparing to abandon his brother-in-law and benefactor. Napoleon, who, ever since his desertion of his post on the Vistula in the preceding spring, had watched his proceedings with a jealous eye, had no difficulty in divining his real motives. But he dissembled these feelings, and embraced his old companion in arms, as he parted with him, with a melancholy presentiment, which was too fatally realised, that he would never see him again.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
967, 970.  
Fain, ii.  
470, 471.  
Jom. iv. 484,  
485. Plottho,  
ii. 432.

Napoleon passed two days at Erfurth, entirely engrossed in the labours of the cabinet. There he composed and sent off his famous bulletin, giving the account of the

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8.

Stay of the  
French army  
at Erfurth,  
Oct. 23 and  
24.

battle of Leipsic: from the place, and the very hotel where, five years before, during the conferences with the Emperor Alexander, his fortunes had attained their highest elevation,\* he now was doomed to date the narrative of his decisive overthrow. These two days' rest had a surprising effect in restoring the spirit and rectifying the disorders of the army; and then might be seen the clearest proof how much the rapid diminution which, since hostilities recommenced, the French army had undergone, had been owing to the almost total want of magazines of provisions for their subsistence, and the consequent necessity of individual pillage: all the effects of the atrocious revolutionary maxim, that war should maintain war. So indignant was the Emperor at this result of physical privations, which he never felt himself, that on witnessing the effect of the magazines of Erfurth in restoring order, he said to the officers around, "Now, only see what a set they are; they are going to the devil. I shall lose eighty thousand men from this to the Rhine in this manner." But even in this moment, when his beaten and dissolving army was only held together by the temporary supply of the magazines which they passed on their march, he was dreaming of fresh projects of conquest, and said repeatedly, "From hence to the Rhine; in spring I shall have two hundred and fifty thousand combatants." He was perfectly calm and collected in his manner, however; firm and unshaken in his views; and heard with equanimity all that was addressed to him, even on the necessity of making peace with the Allies: the subject of all others the most repugnant to his secret thoughts.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. ii. 57,  
58. Fain, ii.  
465, 466.

9.

Re-organisa-  
tion of the  
French army.

The army underwent a great change of composition during its brief sojourn at Erfurth, eminently descriptive of the awful catastrophes which had recently thinned its ranks. All that remained were formed into six corps,† the sad remains of thirteen which, when the armistice terminated, followed the standards of the Emperor. Three whole corps, viz. those of Lauriston, Reynier, and Poniatowski, had disappeared during the catastrophe of Leipsic,

\* *Ante*, Chap. lv. § 6.

† Commanded by Victor, Ney, Bertrand, Marmont, Augereau, and MacDonald.



and were never heard of again in the French army. Oudinot's had been dissolved after the disaster of Dennewitz; two, St Cyr's and Vandamme's, had been left in Dresden; Davoust was in Hamburg, with detachments in Torgau and Magdeburg, and Rapp still held the ramparts of Dantzic. Above a hundred and ten thousand men were left to their fate in the garrisons on the Elbe; in Magdeburg alone there were thirty thousand; in Hamburg twenty-five; in Dresden thirty-five; in Torgau fourteen thousand. The garrisons of these places had been swelled to these enormous amounts by the multitude of stragglers, sick and wounded men, who sought a refuge within their walls after the retreat of the Grand Army from the Elbe. But they proved rather a burden than an advantage to their garrisons, for they brought with them the seeds of physical contagion and mental depression, from the miseries and privations of the campaign, and augmented the number of mouths, which pressed upon the now straitened supplies of provisions. The whole force which the Emperor brought with him from Erfurth towards the Rhine was under ninety thousand men; while twice that number were left blockaded in the fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula; a most extraordinary and unparalleled result of the campaign, and saying little for the general plan of operations which he had adopted.<sup>1</sup>

The stay of the Emperor at Erfurth, even for two days, filled the citizens, most of whom had been reduced to destitution by the continued exactions of the French army, with the utmost anxiety; for they were afraid that, to complete their miseries, they were to be involved in the horrors of a siege. It was necessity, however, from the dilapidated state of the artillery, and the disorganised condition of his troops, which alone dictated this stoppage; and no sooner were the guns and caissons replenished from the magazines of Erfurth, and the troops partially fed and arranged in different corps, than the army resumed its march for the Rhine, and on the same day reached Gotha. Blucher, with unwearied activity, followed on its traces, and not only collected all the abandoned guns and captured the stragglers, but attacked and defeated the rearguard near that town,<sup>2</sup> with the loss

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
466, 407.  
Vaud. i. 225.

10.  
Continued  
retreat of the  
French, and  
pursuit of  
the Allies.

Oct. 25.  
<sup>2</sup> Lab. i. 415.  
Clute de  
l'Emp. de  
Napoleon.  
Fain, ii. 472.  
Bout. 154.  
Plötho, ii.  
446. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
973, 974.

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of two thousand prisoners. The grand Allied army, with the headquarters of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, followed through the Thuringian forest; but so rapid was the retreat of the French towards the Rhine, that they were unable to keep pace with them, and beyond that woody region the task of pursuing the retiring columns was devolved on the Cossacks.

11. These formidable light troops, however, under their renowned leaders, Platoff, Orloff Denisoff, Chernicheff, and Kowaiski, continued the pursuit with indefatigable perseverance. Not only were all foraging parties on either side of the road cut off, but the whole stragglers were made prisoners, and a vast quantity of abandoned guns and ammunition was collected at every step. The certainty of being made prisoners had no effect in deterring a large part of the army from straggling. Such were the pangs they underwent from hunger, that they were often glad of a pretence for yielding themselves to the enemy for the sake of momentary relief; and the woods, for some leagues, were filled with isolated men, great part of whom sank, from pure exhaustion, into the arms of death. With the exception of the frost and snow, the retiring army presented the same appearances as in the Russian retreat. Desertion prevailed to a frightful extent, especially among the few troops of the Rhenish Confederacy which still adhered to the fortunes of Napoleon; the road was strewn, the ditches on either side filled, with the dead bodies of men and horses who had dropped down from the effects of fatigue and famine; and so rapid was the process of dissolution in the whole army, that it was hard to say, in the last days of the retreat, whether it was not melting away as fast as the host which retreated from Moscow had done under the severity of the Russian winter.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
153. Bout.  
154, 155.  
Fain, ii. 472,  
473. Lab. i.  
415, 416.  
Better, i.  
205, 208.  
Plotho, ii.  
442.

12. While Napoleon, however, was thus making by rapid strides for the Rhine, a new and unexpected enemy was arising in that quarter, who threatened to intercept his retreat, and renew on the banks of the Main the horrors of the Beresina. Bavaria, though the last to join the alliance, had taken the most decisive steps to demonstrate her sincerity in the cause which she had newly espoused. No sooner were the cabinet of Munich relieved, by the

12.  
March of  
Wrede and  
the Bavarians  
to the Rhine.

march of Augereau for Leipsic, of the apprehensions excited by the presence of his corps near their frontier at Würzburg, than they yielded, as already mentioned, to the solicitations of the Allies, and concluded a peace with the cabinet of Vienna on the 8th October, in virtue of which Bavaria acceded to the grand alliance. Military operations of the highest importance immediately followed this diplomatic conversion. The Bavarian army, under Marshal Wrede, which was stationed at Braunau, opposite to the Austrian corps under the Prince of Reuss, joined itself to the latter force, and both united set out in the middle of October in the direction of Frankfort on the Main, under the command of Wrede. The whole consisted of three divisions of Bavarian infantry, and two brigades of cavalry of that state, and two divisions of Austrian infantry and one of cavalry; and numbered fifty-six thousand combatants, with one hundred and sixteen guns. On the 19th they passed the Danube at Dönaunwerth, and Wrede marched with such expedition, that on the 27th headquarters were at Aschaffenburg, from whence he detached ten thousand men to Frankfort; and on the 29th he took post in the forest of HANAU, stationing his troops across the great road, and blocking up entirely the retreat of the French army to Mayence.<sup>1</sup>

The forces which Napoleon brought back with him were much more considerable in point of numerical amount; but a large party of them were so completely disorganised and depressed by the privations they had undergone during their retreat, that the contest between the two armies could not be said to be unequal. Nearly ninety thousand men had set out around his standards from Erfurth; but ten thousand had strayed from their colours, or been made prisoners in the subsequent forced marches, and when the army approached the Main, it did not number above eighty thousand men. Fully thirty thousand of these, also, were either stragglers, or so far in the rear as to be of no value in the shock which was approaching; so that, to clear his passage, Napoleon could not rely upon more than fifty thousand men; and his once magnificent artillery of eight hundred pieces was reduced to two hundred guns. They were, for the most part, however, the artillery of the Guard, second to

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Oct. 15.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. iv.  
487. Bout.  
154, 155.  
Vict. et Cong.  
xxii. 153.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
983, 989.  
Plötho. ii.  
448, 452.

13.  
Forces with  
which Napo-  
leon ad-  
vanced  
against him.

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none in Europe for vigour and efficiency ; and the troops, aware of their danger, ardently desirous to get back to France, and perfectly sensible that no other way remained but what they could win at their swords' point, might be expected to fight with the courage of despair. The Guards, moreover, upon whom the weight of the contest was likely to fall, had suffered comparatively little in the late disasters ; and Bertrand's corps had been an entire stranger to the losses of the last two days' combat at Leipsic. The Emperor, therefore, who had slept on the 29th at Langenselbolde, the chateau of the Prince of Isenberg, no sooner heard that the road to Mayence was blocked up by the Bavarian troops, than he made his dispositions for an attack.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
472, 473.  
Jom. ii. 487,  
488. Bout.  
157, 158.  
Vaud. i. 227,  
228.

14.  
Description  
of the field of  
battle at  
Hanau.

Wrede, who had driven the garrison of Würzburg into the citadel, and so secured the passage of that important post on the 27th, reached Hanau with his advanced guard on the 28th, and on the day following brought up the bulk of his forces to that town, and stretching his line across the high road leading to Frankfort and Mayence, entirely stopped the way. His advanced guard soon came into communication with the Cossacks of Chernenicheff and Orloff Denisoff, the vanguard of the Allied grand army which hovered round the outskirts of the French host. No sooner was the junction formed, than the Bavarian general arranged his troops in order of battle, and the position which they occupied was so peculiar, as to be entirely different from any which had formed the theatre of combat since the commencement of the revolutionary war. The Allied army stood in front of Hanau ; the right wing resting on the Kinzig, the left being in echelon on the road from Erfurth to Frankfort. Sixty pieces of cannon were planted in the centre between the bridge of Gelnhausen, over the Kinzig, and the great road, to play on the advancing columns of the enemy when they attempted to debouch from the forest. The vanguard was posted at Ruckingen, with orders to retire from that post as soon as it was seriously attacked, and fall back to the main body of the army, which was drawn up across the great road in the plain which lies between the town of Hanau and the forest of Lamboi. A large body of light troops occupied the forest to retard the

advance of the enemy. That great tract of wood extends for above two leagues in breadth towards Erfurth, and is composed of old oaks, many of them as large as those in Windsor Forest, whose aged stems at times rise out of close thickets of underwood, at others, overshadow with their spreading boughs beautiful vistas of green sward, where numerous herds of swine feed on the acorns ; realising thus, in the days of Napoleon, that scene of primitive nature in northern Europe, in the time of Richard Cœur de Lion, over which modern genius has thrown so enchanting a light.<sup>1</sup> \*

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<sup>1</sup> Personal observation. Bout. 157. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 155. Fain, ii. 475.

The position which the Allied army thus occupied, resembled, in a military point of view, that held by Moreau at the western side of the forest of Hohenlinden ; and if Wrede had been in sufficient strength to keep his ground in front of the issues from the wood, and hinder the enemy from deploying, at the same time that a division was thrown across the thickets, on the flank of the advancing columns, as that of Richepanse was at Hohenlinden, he might possibly have realised the brilliant success of the great republican general on that memorable spot.† But his army was not in sufficient strength to effect such an object. After deducting three battalions left to blockade the citadel of Würzburg, and ten thousand imprudently detached to Frankfort, he could not bring above forty-five thousand men into the field ; and, with such a force, it was impossible to expect that the retreat of eighty thousand combatants, with two hundred pieces of cannon, fighting with the courage of despair, could be arrested, the more especially when the head of the columns was composed of the Old and Young Guard. Nor was the position of the Allies exempt from peril ; for, if they were defeated, and the French army was in a condition to follow up its successes, they ran the risk of being thrown back upon the Main, and destroyed by superior forces, in attempting to make their way across that broad and deep river.<sup>2</sup>

15

Advantage and weakness of Wrede's position there.

<sup>2</sup> Voldern-dorf, iv. 268, 269. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1001, 1004. Jom. iv. 487, 488. Bout. 157. Vaud. i. 229, 236. Wrede's Official Account. Schoell, Recueil, iii. 388.

At eleven o'clock on the forenoon of the 30th the battle commenced. The French columns, preceded by a cloud of tirailleurs, advanced in dense masses ; the artillery

\* The opening scene of the forest in *Ivanhoe*.

† *Ante*, Chap. xxxii. § 29.

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16.

Commence-  
ment of the  
action, and  
obstinate  
struggle in  
the wood.  
Oct. 30.

following the great road, the light troops spread out in the thicket and greensward on either side; and soon a warm fire began in the forest. The dark recesses of the wood were illuminated by the frequent flashes of the musketry: the verdant alleys were hastily traversed by files of armed men, and the action began like a magnificent hunting party in the forest of Fontainebleau. Victor's and Macdonald's corps, now reduced to five thousand combatants, headed the advance, and with some difficulty made their way, fighting as they penetrated through the wood, to the plain beyond it; but when they came there, and endeavoured to deploy on its southwestern skirts, they were crushed by the concentric fire of seventy pieces of cannon, which stood before the Allied line. For four hours the French army was unable to clear its way through the narrow plain which lay between the forest and the banks of the Kinzig. During this period, however, the guards and main body of the army had time to come up; and Napoleon, now seriously disquieted for his line of retreat, immediately ordered a general attack on the enemy. General Curial, with two battalions of the Old Guard, dispersed as tirailleurs, were brought forward to the front, and began to engage the Bavarian sharpshooters. The hardy veterans soon gained ground, and won not only the issues of the forest, but part of the little plain scattered with oaks which lay beyond; and to the space thus won, the artillery of the Guard, under Drouot, was immediately brought forward.<sup>1</sup>

This admirable officer commenced his fire with fifteen guns; but they were gradually augmented, as others came up, to fifty, and soon acquired a decided superiority over the batteries of the enemy, whose artillery, though more numerous, returned the fire feebly, from an apprehension of exhausting their ammunition, the reserves of which had not yet come up from Aschaffenburg. Under cover of Drouot's terrible fire, Nansouty and Sebastiani debouched with the cavalry of the Guard, which had suffered less than any other part of the army in the preceding actions, and by a vigorous charge overthrew every thing that was opposed to them. Wrede, seeing his danger, collected his cavalry, and the Bavarian horse and squares endeavoured to rally behind Chernicheff's

<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
477. Wrede's  
Official  
Account.  
Schoell,  
Recueil, iii.  
389. Bout.  
158. Plotho,  
ii. 456. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1007, 1009.

17.  
The passage  
is forced by  
the artillery  
and cavalry  
of the Guard.

Cossacks; but although the Russian dragoons combated bravely, they were unable to withstand the thundering charges of the French cuirassiers, and the point-blank discharge of the artillery of the Guard. Ere long the whole left wing of the Allies gave way and fled towards the Kinzig, leaving the plain between the river and the wood, and the road to Frankfort, open to the enemy. As a last resource, the Bavarian general made an effort on his right; but Napoleon quickly pushed forward two battalions of the Old Guard, who arrested his advance; and Wrede, despairing of success, withdrew the shattered remains of his army behind the Kinzig, under protection of the cannon of Hanau.<sup>1</sup>

While this vehement conflict was going on at the entrance of the wood, Napoleon himself, in the depths of the forest, was a prey to the most anxious solicitude. Fresh troops were continually coming up from the rear; but the highway and alleys through the forest were already blocked up with carriages and cannon, and the increasing multitude, when no issue could be obtained, only augmented the confusion and embarrassment in its wooded recesses. The Emperor, unquiet and anxious, was meantime walking backwards and forwards on the highway, near the bend which the road makes, conversing with Caulaincourt. A bomb fell near them in a ditch bordering the highway; the latter immediately placed himself between the Emperor and the danger, and they continued their conversation as if nothing had occurred. The attendants of Napoleon hardly ventured to draw their breath; but the bomb had sunk so deep in the ditch, that it was prevented from bursting. Meanwhile the forest on all sides resounded with the echoes of artillery. The eye sought in vain to measure its depths, even with the aid of the bright flashes which illuminated their gloom; the crash of the cannon-balls was heard with frightful violence, on the gnarled branches of the oaks; and not a few of the French were killed by the fall of the huge arms which had been torn from the sides of these venerable patriarchs of the forest by the violent strokes. When Wrede's last and desperate onset was made on the French left, in particular, the combatants approached so near that their cries were distinctly heard,

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<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
156, 157.  
Bout. 158,  
159. Fain, ii.  
477, 479.  
Wrede's Offi-  
cial Report.  
Schoell, Rec.  
iii. 389.  
Plötho, ii.  
458. Vol-  
derndorf, iv.  
275. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1017, 1018.

18.

Position and  
danger of  
Napoleon  
during the  
action.

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<sup>1</sup> Fain, ii.  
478, 479.  
Norvins,  
Portefeuille  
de 1813, ii.  
431.

and the tops of the trees were violently agitated, as in a hurricane, by the bullets which whistled through their branches. The repulse of that attack by the infantry of the Old Guard removed, indeed, the danger, and opened the road to Frankfort; but the Emperor, notwithstanding, did not march on with the advanced Guard, but spent the night in the forest, like Richard Cœur de Lion, beside a blazing watchfire under the oaks, where next morning he received a deputation from the magistrates of Hanau, who came to beseech him to spare their city the horrors of an assault.<sup>1\*</sup>

19.  
Capture of  
Hanau by  
the French  
on the 31st.

Oct. 31.  
<sup>2</sup> Wrede's  
Official  
Account.  
Schoell,  
Recueil, iii.  
391. Vaud.  
252. Bont.  
161. Plotho,  
ii. 459.  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1023, 1024.

During the night after the battle, the French army defiled without intermission on the great road by Wilhelmstadt, from whence it moved by Höchstadt on Frankfort. But though the Guards and principal part of the army were thus placed beyond the reach of danger, it was not so easy a matter to say how the rearguard, and the numerous stragglers who followed its columns, were to be brought through the perilous pass between the forest and the river. Late on the evening of the 30th, the rearguard, under Mortier, was still at Gelnhausen, on the other side of the forest; and, in order to protect his retreat, Marmont was left before Hanau, with a considerable part of the army. At two in the morning of the 31st he began to bombard the town, and with such effect, that it was evacuated early in the forenoon by the Austrian garrison, and immediately taken possession of by the French forces. No sooner was this *point d'appui* secured on the other side of the Kinzig, than Marmont attacked the right of the Allies posted behind the road to Aschaffenburg, and with such impetuosity, that it was forced to give way, and thrown back in disorder on the Main,<sup>2</sup> where it must inevitably have been destroyed, if

\* The field of battle at Hanau is one of the most interesting of the many spots on the continent of Europe to which the exploits of Napoleon have given durable celebrity, as well from the circumstance of its having been the theatre of the last of his German conflicts, as from the extraordinary and romantic character of the old forest where the severest part of the action took place. When the author visited this spot, in 1816, the marks of the then recent conflict were every where conspicuous on the huge trunks and gnarled branches of the oaks, many of which were cleft asunder or torn off their stems by the cannon-shot; while the naturally picturesque appearance of the decaying masses was singularly increased by the cavities made by the howitzers and balls, which were in many cases sunk into the wood, and the ruined aspect of the broken branches, half overgrown with underwood, which encumbered its grassy glades.



the Guards and cuirassiers of the French army had been at hand to support the advantage.

They had, however, meanwhile passed on towards Frankfort; and Marmont, in consequence, solicitous only to secure the passage of the rearguard of Mortier, paused in the career of success, and at two in the afternoon fell back towards Hanau, followed by Wrede, who, stung to the quick by the disaster he had experienced, himself led on his forces, and stormed that town at the head of his troops; but in pursuing the Italian rearguard towards the Kinzig, he received a severe wound, which obliged him to relinquish the command. At the same time, another column of the Allies drove the French over the bridge of Lamboi; but, pursuing their advantage too warmly in the plain in front of the forest, they were attacked in flank by a French column issuing from the woods, and driven back with great loss. These checks, and the wound of Wrede, rendered General Tresnel, who succeeded him in the command, more circumspect. Relinquishing, therefore, all hope of inflicting further injury on the retreating army, he withdrew his troops behind the Kinzig, and Marmont continued his retreat to Frankfort, where the same night he was joined by Mortier with the rearguard. That marshal having heard an exaggerated account of the losses of the army on the day before, had, by marching all the preceding night by Langenselbolde, succeeded by a circuitous route in avoiding the scene of danger.<sup>1</sup>

The battle of Hanau cost the Allies ten thousand men, of whom four thousand were prisoners; and the French lost seven thousand, of whom three thousand were wounded and left in the forest, from want of carriages to convey them away. The road to Frankfort from the field of battle resembled an immense wreck, being strewn with ammunition waggons, broken down guns, dead horses, and wounded men, who were abandoned in the precipitate retreat of the French army. Napoleon left that city on the 1st November: soon the red domes and steeples of Mayence appeared in view; the army defiled in mournful silence over the long bridge which it had so often passed in the pride of anticipated victory; the Emperor remained six days in that stronghold,<sup>2</sup> to collect

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20.

Its recapture by Wrede, and retreat of the French to Frankfort.

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse Chron. i. 1026, 1027. Plotho, ii. 462. Bout. 161, 162. Fain, ii. 480, 481. Vaud. 252, 253. Wrede's Official Account. Schoell, Recueil, iii. 390, 391.

21.

Results of the battle, and passage of the Rhine by the French.

<sup>2</sup> Fain, ii. 480, 481. Bout. 164. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 160, 161. Plotho, ii. 462, 463. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1027, note.

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the ruined remains of his vast army, and then set out for Paris, where he arrived on the 9th. Meanwhile the French eagles bade A FINAL ADIEU TO THE GERMAN PLAINS, the theatre of their glories, of their crimes, and of their punishment.

22.  
Reflections  
on the battle.

The battle of Hanau was a dignified termination to the exploits of the French revolutionary army beyond the Rhine, and threw a parting ray of glory over their long and successful career. Its lustre belongs in an especial manner to the Imperial Guard, by whom the victory was almost exclusively gained; and certainly no troops could, under circumstances of greater difficulty and depression, have achieved a more glorious triumph. When we reflect that the soldiers who, after sharing in the dangers, and witnessing the disasters of the greatest battle recorded in history, were obliged to toil for above two hundred miles through a wearisome and disastrous retreat, suddenly found themselves, at its close, assailed by a fresh army, superior to that which at the moment they could array against it, and which entirely blocked up their only line of retreat—we must admit that, equally with the discipline and resolution of the Guard during the Russian retreat, their victory on this occasion demonstrates the unconquerable firmness of those iron bands, whom the training and victories of Napoleon had nursed up to be at once the glory, the terror, and the scourge of Europe.

23.  
Light it  
throws on  
previous ope-  
rations in the  
war.

It throws a clear and important light upon the wisdom of Kutusoff in not attempting to stop the Imperial Guard at Krasnoi,\* and contenting himself with the lesser but safer advantage of passing the succeeding columns over the edge of the sword; and on the injustice of the clamour which has been raised against Tchichakoff, because with less than thirty thousand men, and a hundred and fifty guns, he did not succeed in stopping Napoleon at the Beresina, who had forty thousand efficient combatants, independent of as many stragglers, and two hundred and fifty guns at his disposal.† In truth, the success of the French at the Beresina, of the Russians at Culm, of the English at Corunna, and of Napoleon at Hanau, demonstrates the truth of the old adage, that it is in general well to make a bridge of gold for a flying enemy. Nothing is

\* *Ante*, Chap. lxxiii. § 68.

† *Ante*, Chap. lxxiii. § 86.

often more fallacious in such a case, than to judge of the prostration of the strength of an army by the number of its stragglers, the disorder of its columns, the wreck of guns and ammunition waggons which marks its course, or the languor with which it resists when attacked by the *pursuing* enemy. All these are the beginning of ruin, but they are not ruin itself; and if their retreat is threatened, and the necessity of opening a passage at the sword's point becomes evident to every capacity, it is surprising how soon order will be resumed under the pressure of impending danger, and a desperate valour will compensate the loss of the largest amount of material resources.

While the sad remains of the French army were retiring across the Rhine, the Allied troops followed closely on their footsteps; and the forces of central and eastern Europe poured in prodigious strength down the valley of the Main. On the 4th November the advanced guards, under Prince Schwartzenberg, entered Frankfort; and on the same day the headquarters of the Allied sovereigns reached Aschaffenburg. On the day following, Alexander made his entry into Frankfort at the head of twenty thousand horse, amidst the universal transports of the inhabitants; and the Imperial headquarters were fixed there, till preparations could be made for the arduous undertaking of crossing the Rhine, and carrying the war into the heart of France. At the same time, their forces on all sides rapidly approached that frontier stream. Schwartzenberg forced the passage of the Nidda, and advanced to Höchst, within two leagues of Mayence, while Blucher, on his right, approached the Rhine, and fixed his headquarters at Giessen. A few days after, Giulay received instructions to attack Hochheim, a small town fortified with five redoubts, which stands a little in advance of the *tête-du-pont* of Mayence at Cassel, and was garrisoned by six thousand men, under Guillemot, supported by Morand with an equal force. So formidable, however, were the columns which the Allies had destined for its assault—consisting of Giulay's column, which attacked the town itself, while Prince Alois of Lichtenstein turned its right, and threatened its communication with the Rhine—that the place was speedily carried,<sup>1</sup> and the

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24.  
Combat of  
Hochheim,  
and approach  
of the Allied  
armies to the  
Rhine.  
Nov. 4.

Nov. 5.

Nov. 6.

Nov. 9.

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1033, 1068.  
Volderndorf,  
iv. 288, 290.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
161. Bout.  
165, 166.

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French were driven, with the loss of three hundred prisoners, into the *tête-du-pont* of Cassel, the last fortified post in that quarter which they possessed on the right bank of the Rhine.

25.  
Winter quar-  
ters of both  
parties.

This combat was the last of the campaign, so far as the grand armies on either side were concerned. Exhausted with a contest of such unexampled fatigue and vehemence, both commanders put their forces into winter quarters. Those of Napoleon, entirely on the left bank of the Rhine, extended from Cologne on the north, to Strasburg on the south; but the bulk of his forces were stationed at Mayence, Coblenz, and opposite to the centre of the Allied forces around Frankfort. The grand Allied army, including both that of Blucher and of Schwartzberg, extended along the course of the Rhine, from Kehl to Coblenz: the army of Silesia, forming the right, being opposite to Coblenz, and spreading up the hilly part of the Rhine to Ehrenbreitstein; that of Bohemia spreading from the Main to the Neckar, and thence to the borders of the Black Forest.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1069, 1074.  
Vaud. i.  
237. Bout.  
167.

26.  
Enthusiasm  
of the Ger-  
man troops  
when they  
approached  
the Rhine.

The Germans have long connected heart-stirring associations with the sight, and even the name of the Rhine. The vast amphitheatre of the central Alps, from the snows of which that noble stream takes its rise; the sublime cataract by which it descends into the plains of Germany; the ancient and peopled cities which lie along its banks; the romantic regions through whose precipices it afterwards flows; the feudal remains by which their summits are crowned; the interesting legends of the olden time with which they are connected; the vineyards which nestle in their sunny nooks; the topaz blaze of the cliffs on which the mouldering ruins are placed—have long sunk into the heart of that imaginative people, and, united to the thrilling music of Haydn, have touched the inmost chords of the German soul.\* They connected it, in an especial manner, with the idea of Germany *as a*

\* "The Rhine! the Rhine! be blessings on the Rhine!  
St Rochus bless the land of love and wine!  
The groves and high-hung meads, whose glories shine  
In painted waves below;  
Its rocks, whose topaz beam betrays the vine,  
Or richer ruby glow.  
The Rhine! the Rhine! be blessings on the Rhine!  
Beats there a sad heart here?—pour forth the wine!"

*whole.* It was their great frontier stream ; it recalled the days of their emperors and independence ; it had become, as it were, the emblem of the Fatherland. It may easily be conceived what effect upon the armies of a people thus excited—whose hearts had thrilled to the songs of Körner, whose swords had drunk of the blood of Leipsic—the sight of the Rhine produced, when it first burst upon their united and conquering arms. Involuntarily the columns halted when they reached the heights beyond Hochheim, where its windings spread out as on a map beneath their feet ; the rear ranks hurried to the front ; the troops uncovered as they beheld the stream of their fathers ; tears trickled down many cheeks ; joy, too big for utterance, swelled every heart ; and the enthusiasm passing from rank to rank, soon a hundred thousand voices joined in the cheers which told the world that the war of independence was ended, AND GERMANY DELIVERED.<sup>1</sup>\*

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<sup>1</sup> Personal knowledge.

Nothing remained but to reap the fruits of this mighty victory, to gather up the fragments of this prodigious spoil. Yet so wide was it spread, so far had the French empire extended over Europe, that to collect its ruins was a matter of no small time and labour. The giant was thrown down, but it was no easy undertaking to uncase his limbs, and collect his armour. The rickety kingdom of Westphalia was the first of Napoleon's political creations which sank to the dust, never again to rise. Jerome, already almost dethroned by the incursion of Chernicheff, was finally swept away by the arms of Bernadotte. Woronzoff, with the advanced guard of his army, entered Cassel nine days after the battle of Leipsic ; Jerome had previously abandoned that capital ; the greater part of his army joined the Allies, and the few who remained faithful to his cause precipitately retired to Dusseldorf, where he crossed the Rhine. He was closely followed by Winzingerode, who not only soon organised the whole kingdom of Westphalia in the

27.

Final overthrow of the kingdom of Westphalia.

Oct. 23.

\* The following lines were at this period added to the national anthem, pointing to the anxious desire, generally felt, to reclaim from the spoiler the German provinces on the left bank of the Rhine :—

“ The Rhine shall no longer be our boundary ;  
It is the great artery of the state,  
And it shall flow through the heart of our empire.”

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1813.

Nov. 6.

interest of the Allies, but overran and destroyed the revolutionary dynasty in the Grand-duchy of Berg, which united its arms to the common standards of Germany. The army of the Prince-Royal, united to that of Benningsen, no longer required for the great operations in the field, spread itself over the north of Germany. By Göttingen it marched to Hanover, every where re-establishing the authority of the King of England, amidst the unanimous transports of the inhabitants, who chased away their old oppressors, the douaniers, with every mark of ignominy. Bernadotte's headquarters were established in that city, while Winzingerode spread over the Grand-duchy of Oldenburg and East Friesland; and Bulow marched to Munster, on his way to Holland, where the people were only waiting for the approach of the Allied standards to throw off the French yoke, and declare their independence. Those Prussian corps, with their shoes and clothing entirely worn out by the protracted and fatiguing campaign they had undergone, were now in no condition to undertake any ulterior operations; but at this juncture a liberal supply of clothing and every necessary arrived from England, which at once restored their former efficiency, and for which they expressed the most unbounded gratitude.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Plottho, ii.  
508, 511.  
Lond. 200,  
202, 205.  
Bout. 168.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 162.

28.

Operations  
against  
Davoust on  
the Lower  
Elbe.

Nov. 20.

Nov. 24.

Nov. 26.

Dec. 1.

Davoust, who had been left in Hamburg with twenty-five thousand French, besides ten thousand Danes, presented a more important and difficult object of conquest. Bernadotte wisely determined to unite his forces to those of Walmoden, in order to cut off the retreat, and secure the reduction, of this powerful body of veteran troops; and with this view he broke up from Hanover on the 20th November, and marched by Lüneburg to Boitzenburg on the Elbe, where he arrived four days afterwards; while Woronzoff invested Harburg, and Strogonoff moved against Stade. An attempt to take the latter town by escalade failed; but the French commander, fearing a repetition of the attack, withdrew his forces across the Elbe, and joined the Danes at Gluckstadt. The Prince-Royal, having now collected forty thousand men, prepared a general attack on Davoust, who was in position behind the Steckenitz; but the French marshal,

fearful of being cut off from Hamburg, quitted that position during the night, and retired behind the Bille. The effect of this retrograde movement was to separate entirely the French corps from the Danish auxiliaries; and the latter, foreseeing the perilous predicament in which their allies would soon be placed, deemed it most expedient to detach themselves from their fortunes, and accordingly retired to Lübeck. Thither they were immediately followed by the Allied forces. The Danish commander, finding himself menaced with an assault which he was in no condition to resist, proposed a capitulation, which was accepted, and he was permitted to rejoin the bulk of the Danish forces at Segeberg, while Davoust shut himself up in Hamburg, resolved to defend his post to the last extremity.<sup>1</sup>

The Danes after this retired towards their own country followed by Walmoden; but seeing that the Allied general had imprudently extended himself too far, they gained an unforeseen advantage over him. Three battalions of Danish infantry, with two regiments of cavalry, and six guns, having been vigorously charged by the Swedish horse, had laid down their arms; but the Swedish commander having imprudently left only a single squadron of hussars to guard so large a body of prisoners, they rose on their escort, and almost all escaped, leaving the guns alone in the hands of the Swedes. After this event, discreditable to both parties, the one for the surprise, the other for the breach of faith, the Danes retired in a body towards Kiel, pursued by Walmoden, who, in order to cut off their retreat, took post himself at Osterrade with part of his forces, while the remainder pushed on after their line of retreat. The Danes, seeing their pursuers thus divided, quickly fell upon the corps at Osterrade with ten thousand men, and defeated it with considerable loss. The torrent of success, however, on the part of the Allies, was too violent to be arrested by such a casual check. Threatened by superior forces, the Danes shut themselves up in Rendsburg; Bernadotte advanced to Kiel; and the Allies spread themselves over the whole of the south of Jutland. Upon this, the Danish commander, seeing it was impossible to keep the field against such superior forces, and that the whole southern provinces

CHAP.  
LXXXII.

1813.

Dec. 3.

<sup>1</sup> Lond. 209,  
210. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
163. Bout.  
170, 171.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1081, 1089.

29.

Concluding  
operations  
against the  
Danes, and  
armistice  
with them.  
Dec. 6.

Dec. 7.

CHAP.  
LXXXII.

1813.

Dec. 15.

<sup>1</sup> Richter,  
ii. 434, 437.  
Bout. 173,  
174. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
163, 164.  
See the  
Treaties in  
Martens'  
Sup. v. 673,  
681.  
Dec. 19.

of Denmark would speedily be overrun, entered into conferences with the Prince-Royal with a view to an armistice, and the adhesion of Denmark to the Allied powers. On the 15th December an armistice was accordingly concluded, to endure for fifteen days only; but this led to negotiations with the cabinet of Copenhagen, which terminated in a peace between Denmark and the Allied powers, which was signed on the 14th January and 8th February 1814: the particulars of the treaty will afterwards be given. Meanwhile, the two fortresses of Gluckstadt and Friedrichsort, being excluded from the armistice, were besieged by the Swedish forces; and such activity did the Prince-Royal display in his operations, that the latter of these fortresses was compelled to surrender on the 19th December, with a hundred pieces of cannon and eight hundred prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

30.  
Operations  
of St Cyr and  
Ostermann  
before Dres-  
den.

The principal attention of the Allies, however, after the battle of Leipsic, was drawn to the city of Dresden, where St Cyr, as already noticed,\* had been left with thirty-five thousand men, when Napoleon set out in the direction of Wittenberg and Berlin. At that period, the only force left to observe the place was Count Ostermann Tolstoy's, whose troops did not exceed twenty thousand men. Profiting by so considerable a superiority, St Cyr wisely resolved to make a sortie, and throw the enemy back upon the Bohemian frontier. Four divisions accordingly, mustering altogether twenty thousand men, issued on the 17th October against the Russian general, whose forces were for the most part new levies who had never seen fire. Two divisions of the French attacked the Russians in front, while two others assailed them in flank by the side of Plauen. With such skill was St Cyr's attack conceived, and with such vigour was it executed, that Ostermann's troops were broken at all points, and obliged to retire in disorder, which their great superiority in cavalry alone prevented from being converted into a flight. As it was, the loss they sustained amounted to twelve hundred prisoners, ten guns, and a bridge equipage, besides fifteen hundred killed and wounded. Disconcerted by this check, Ostermann hastened to regain the Bohemian frontier,<sup>2</sup> which he crossed two days after;

Oct. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1152, 1155.  
St Cyr, iv.  
206, 218.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 166.  
Bout. 177,  
178. Jom. iv.  
491.  
Oct. 19.

\* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxi. § 8.



and the garrison of Töplitz, consisting of ten thousand Austrians, having advanced to his support, St Cyr relinquished the pursuit and returned to Dresden, where in the interval all the works erected by the enemy to straiten the city had been demolished.

This advantage was considerable, and alike creditable to the talents of St Cyr, and the valour of the troops under his command; but it was an accessory only, and did not counterbalance the great events of the campaign. It was in the plains of Leipsic that the fate of Dresden and its immense garrison was decided. When Napoleon set out from the Saxon capital for Düben, he left for the troops it contained, only provisions for seven, and forage for three days;<sup>1</sup> and so complete was the exhaustion of the surrounding country, that the garrison were able to add hardly any thing to these scanty stores, during the few days that they had regained possession of the open country. At the same time, the influx of stragglers, sick and wounded, left behind by the Grand Army on leaving the Elbe, continued unabated. All attempts to execute Napoleon's orders, by sending the maimed to Torgau, had failed, under circumstances of more than usual horror; \* and Dresden, encumbered with agonised and useless mouths, soon found itself beset by a double amount of enemies. No sooner was the battle of Leipsic decided, than Schwartzemberg, justly eager to secure so splendid a prize as the fruit of his victory, detached Klenau with his whole force to reinforce Ostermann, who in the mean time, had more than recruited his losses by drafts from Töplitz, and the other garrisons and depots in the interior of Bohemia. Their troops,<sup>2</sup> fully fifty thousand

CHAP.  
LXXXII.

1813.

31.

The blockade  
is resumed  
after the  
battle of  
Leipsic.

<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
202.

<sup>2</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
227. Bont.  
178. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
166. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1155, 1157.

\* "As soon as the wounded were apprised of the intention to remove them, they gave themselves up to transports of joy, thinking they would now at length revisit their country. In such multitudes did they crowd, or rather crawl, down to the quays, that the boats were in danger of sinking, and one was actually submerged, and all on board perished. Nevertheless, though a few only could be received, from the limited number of boats, nothing could prevail on these unhappy wretches to return to the hospitals. They preferred lying down in rows along the river side, to be in readiness to get into the first boat that appeared. The assemblage of these spectres, who lay out all night in the cold, presented the most hideous spectacle which a war, where such scenes were too frequent, could exhibit. But the superiority of the enemy, and the manner in which Napoleon had conducted the war, rendered the prescribed evacuation totally impossible. All the hospitals in the rear, sooner or later, fell into the enemy's hands. Three thousand were sent from Dresden in boats, but I never ascertained whether they reached Torgau."—St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 200, 201.

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LXXXII.

1813.

Oct. 26.  
Oct. 27.

strong, effected a junction on the 26th, and resumed the blockade of Dresden on the day following; when St Cyr, in no condition to keep the field against such superior forces, was obliged to shut himself up with a dejected army, and hardly any provisions.

32.  
Miserable  
condition and  
difficulties of  
St Cyr.

The condition of the French marshal was now in the highest degree alarming, and such as might well have struck terror into the most dauntless breast. Although the troops under his orders had exerted themselves to the utmost, during the ten days that they had the command of the adjacent country, to recruit their slender stock of provisions; yet such was the total exhaustion of its resources by the previous requisitions of Napoleon, and the passage of so many vast armies over its surface, that they were barely able to maintain themselves by the most rigorous exactions, without adding any thing to the miserable stores, adequate only to seven days' consumption, which Napoleon had left for their use. On the 27th October, therefore, they found themselves shut up in Dresden with this scanty stock of provisions: while, at the same time, the depression of the troops, the almost total exhaustion of ammunition, the rapid desertion of all the German auxiliaries within the place, and the superior forces of the enemy before its walls, rendered it altogether impossible to attempt to make their way out by force of arms. During the whole of this period they were left without any orders, direct or indirect, from Napoleon, or any other intelligence than the rumours, vague and exaggerated, which prevailed as to the disaster of Leipsic. Driven to desperation, St Cyr endeavoured to make a sortie, with fifteen thousand men, by the right bank of the Elbe, in order to effect, if possible, a junction with the garrison of Torgau or Wittenberg, and with their united force cut his way across to the Rhine.<sup>1</sup>

Nov. 6.  
1 St Cyr, iv.  
247, 250.  
Bout. 177.  
Vaud. 241,  
242. Plötho,  
ii. 532, 533.

33.  
St Cyr in  
vain tries a  
sortie.  
Nov. 6.

But the Allied generals had information of his design, and were on the alert. General Wied Runkel met them with three thousand men on the 6th; and though the French were nearly five times that number, yet such was their physical attenuation from want, and moral depression from disaster, that they were unable to force their way through, and, after a slight combat, were

driven back again into Dresden. This check, and throwing back of mouths, proved fatal both to the spirits and resources of the garrison: discouragement became universal, escape seemed impossible, provisions of every sort were absolutely exhausted, discipline was dissolved by suffering: the miserable soldiers wandered about like spectres in the streets, or sank in woful crowds into the hospitals.

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LXXXII.  
1813.

Nov. 11.

“Semanimes errare viis, dum stare valebant,  
Adspiceres; flentes alios, terræque jacentes,  
Lassaque versantes supremo lumina motu.  
Membraque pendentis tendunt ad sidera cœli;  
Hic, illic, ubi mors deprenderat, exhalantes.  
Quo se cunque acies oculorum flexerat, illic  
Vulgus erat stratum.”\*

“Such,” says an eye-witness, “was the famishing condition of the French troops, that they pillaged for the twentieth time the neighbouring vineyards, and cut flesh off the limbs of the wounded horses lying by the wayside. In the interior of the town misery had risen to the highest pitch. The mills were idle: there was neither grain to grind, nor water to turn the wheels. The bakers had shut up their shops, having no more bread to sell: a miserable crowd surrounded their doors, demanding, with mingled threats and prayers, their accustomed supplies. Many of the poor had been for several days without bread; and, as the stock of butcher meat was also nearly expended, they were reduced to the most miserable shifts to support life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, iv.  
247, 250.  
Odel. ii. 227,  
234. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1156, 1160.

“Nor were the French soldiers in any better situation: every day they killed thirty horses; and, instead of the accustomed ration of an ounce and a half of butcher meat, to which they had been long reduced, they got nothing but double that quantity of horse flesh, often so bad that the soldiers could not eat it, even though pressed by the pangs of hunger. At last, however, famine overcame their repugnance, and the miserable wretches disputed with each other the half putrid carcasses which they found in the streets, and soon their bones were laid bare, and the very tendons of the dead animals eagerly devoured. The ravages which a contagious fever made on the inhabitants of the town, added to the public

34.  
Miseries of  
the French  
troops.

CHAP.  
LXXXII.

1813.

distress. Among the citizens alone, not less than three hundred were carried off weekly by it. Two hundred dead bodies were every day brought out of the military hospitals. Such was the accumulation in the churchyards, that the gravediggers could not inter them, and they were laid naked, in ghastly rows, along the place of sepulture. The bodies were heaped in such numbers on the dead carts, that frequently they fell from them, and the wheels gave a frightful sound in cracking the bones of the corpses which thus lay on the streets.\*

“Corpora missa neci, nullis de more feruntur  
Funeribus; neque enim capiebant funera portæ.  
Aut inhumata premunt terras, aut dantur in altos  
Indotata rogos.”

The hospital attendants, and carters, trampled down the dead in the carts, like baggage or straw, to make room for more; and, not unfrequently, some of the bodies gave signs of life, and even emitted shrieks under this harsh usage. Several of those thrown into the Elbe for dead, were revived by the sudden immersion in cold water, and the wretches were seen struggling in vain with the waves, by which they were soon swallowed up. Medicines and hospital stores there were none; and almost all the surgeons and apothecaries were dead.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Odel. ii.  
227, 234.  
Plottho, ii.  
532.

35.  
Capitulation  
of the place.

<sup>2</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1159, 1160.  
St Cyr, iv.  
247, 257.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
166, 167.  
Rout. 178.  
Odel. ii. 230,  
238. Plottho,  
ii. 532.

At length, the French marshal, unable to prolong his defence, entered into a capitulation, in virtue of which the Allies gained possession of the town, and the French laid down their arms, on condition of being sent back to France, and not serving against the Allies till regularly exchanged. On the day following, the troops began to defile out of the town in six columns, and after laying down their arms, proceeded on the road to France. The result showed the magnitude of the success which had been achieved, and the terrible disasters which were accumulating round Napoleon's empire since the catastrophe of Leipsic; for the number who surrendered were no less than thirty-two generals, seventeen hundred and ninety-five officers, and thirty-three thousand private soldiers, of whom twenty-five thousand were able to bear arms.<sup>2</sup>

The terms awarded to the French garrison were nearly

\* OVID. *Metam.* vii. 605.

the same as those which Napoleon, in 1796, had granted to Marshal Wurmser at the capitulation of Mantua;\* and the Allies obtained possession, by the surrender, of no less than two hundred and forty pieces of cannon. When the troops marched out, they afforded a melancholy proof of the degree to which the exactions of the Emperor had strained the physical resources of France, and his total disregard of the comforts or subsistence of his soldiers; for such was the weakness of the infantry, arising from youth, fatigue, and famine, that, by the admission of St Cyr himself, three-fourths of them would have perished before they reached the Rhine.† Such as it was, however, the capitulation was disapproved of by Schwartzberg and the Allied sovereigns, who intimated to St Cyr that no terms of surrender could be admitted but such as provided for the garrison being conducted as prisoners of war into the Austrian states; but that, if he was dissatisfied with these conditions, the troops would be replaced in Dresden in the same situation in which they were before the convention had been concluded. This offer, which was communicated to St Cyr at Altenburg, on the road to France, the day following the capitulation, was felt by him, as indeed it was equally by his opponents, to be perfectly elusory; as not only were the enemy now in Dresden, and had been there for seven days, but they had become acquainted with all its weak points, and in particular with the absolute want of provisions to subsist a besieged garrison even for a single day. He rightly declined to accede, therefore, to the alternative offered of returning to Dresden; and being unable to make any resistance, preferred being conducted, with all his followers, as prisoners of war into Bohemia; loudly protesting against this violation of the convention, as a breach of good faith and of the laws of war, which would one day recoil with fearful force on the heads of the parties who were guilty of it.<sup>1</sup>

This refusal, on the part of the Allied sovereigns, to ratify a convention concluded by the general in the full

CHAP.  
LXXXII.

1813.

36.

Terms of the capitulation, which are violated by the Allied generals.

Nov. 19.

Nov. 20.

<sup>1</sup> Chastellar to St Cyr, 19th Nov. 1813. St Cyr to Chastellar, 20th Nov. 1813. St Cyr, iv. 497, 499. See Capitulation in St Cyr, iv. 484.

\* *Ante*, Chap. xx. § 151.

† "Les soldats, trop jeunes pour supporter les fatigues d'une campagne aussi active, et des privations si longues, étaient à la vérité dans un tel état d'épuisement que la moitié et peut-être les trois quarts n'auraient pu regagner les bords du Rhin."—St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 256.

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LXXXII.

1813.

37.  
Reflections  
on the breach  
of this con-  
vention by  
the Allies.

command of their armies on the occasion, has excited, as well it might, the most vehement feelings of indignation among the French writers. There can be no doubt that it was to the last degree impolitic in Klenau to have acceded to such a convention, when escape and subsistence were equally beyond the power of the enemy ; and when, by simply maintaining his position for a few days, without firing a shot, he must have compelled them to surrender at discretion. It is equally certain that, even if half the garrison reached the Rhine, they would have proved no small acquisition to Napoleon, whose greatest weakness was now likely to arise from the want of experienced soldiers, and whose necessities might render him little scrupulous in his adherence to the treaty, as to their not serving again till exchanged. But all these considerations are reasons why the capitulation should never have been entered into ; they afford none to vindicate its violation. Schwartzemberg might have debarred his lieutenants from entering into any convention, but such as contained a reservation of his sanction ; but he had not done so. Klenau had full powers ; and the capitulation, upon the faith of which the French had delivered up Dresden, surrendered their guns and laid down their arms, was clearly within his duties and province as the general commanding the siege, and was absolute, without any condition or suspensive clause. In these circumstances, it was unquestionably obligatory upon the honour of the victors, who are bound, by the most sacred of all ties, to respect the rights of those who are in their power, and have become incapable of making any further resistance.

38.  
Injustice of  
this proceed-  
ing on their  
part.

Justice in such a case can admit of no equivocation, derived even from the most pressing reasons of expediency. Honour regards all treaties with the vanquished as debts which must be paid. The proposal to reinstate St Cyr in the Saxon capital, after its defences and total want of provisions had become known, and his own troops were far advanced on the road to the Rhine, though the best that could be done next to observing the convention, was plainly an offer such as the French garrison neither could, nor were bound to accept. In violating this convention, the Allied sovereigns did not imitate

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the honourable fidelity with which Napoleon observed the conditions of the capitulation of Mantua, granted to Wurmser in 1796;\* but rather took a model from the cordial approbation which he gave to the unworthy fraud by which the bridge of the Danube was surprised in 1805,† or the express example which he had set of disavowing an armistice, in his own refusal to ratify that of Treviso, concluded in 1801 by his lieutenant Brune.‡ Condemning equally such deviations from the path of honour by all parties engaged in the contest, it is with pride and gratitude that the English historian must refer to the conduct of his own country on occasion of a similar crisis; and when he recollects that the convention of Cintra, though unanimously condemned by the English people, was executed, on the admission of their opponents themselves, with scrupulous fidelity by the British government,§ he must admit that such an honourable distinction was cheaply purchased by all the advantages which its faithful observance gave to the enemy.||

The interest excited by the refusal, on the part of the Allied sovereigns, to ratify the convention of Dresden, was, however, attended with one good effect, in preventing a similar political mistake in the case of Marshal Davoust and the garrison of Hamburg. Bernadotte, who had now assumed the command in chief in that quarter, was far from evincing the same activity and vigour in his operations against the important French army shut up in that city, which he had displayed in bringing to a conclusion hostilities with the ancient rivals of Sweden—the Danes. On the contrary, he had at this period entered into negotiations with the French marshal, the object of which was, that, upon condition of surrendering Hamburg and the adjacent forts, he was to be permitted to retire to France with all his forces. He, in the first instance, had promised Sir Charles Stewart that he would not enter into such a capitulation without his consent;

39.  
Lord Londonderry prevents a similar capitulation being granted to Davoust.

\* *Ante*, Chap. xx. § 151.

† *Ante*, Chap. xl. § 106.

‡ *Ante*, Chap. xxxii. § 71.

§ "The convention of Cintra, though condemned by public opinion in England, was executed with honourable fidelity by the English government."—FOY, iv. 356. "Look at England. She condemned the convention of Cintra, but did not the less execute its provisions with scrupulous faith."—NAPOLEON.

|| *Ante*, Chap. liv. § 75.

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1813.

Lond. 210,  
211.40.  
Fall of  
Stettin and  
siege of  
Torgau.  
Nov. 21.

but no sooner had the former been called to Frankfort, to attend on behalf of England the conferences of the Allied powers, than he sent express instructions to Walmoden to bring about a convention of such a character with Davoust. But this equivocal step did not escape the vigilant eye of the English military plenipotentiary, who, the moment he received intelligence of what was in agitation, despatched such energetic remonstrances against the proposed measure, that the Prince-Royal was obliged to abandon it.\* And thus the same eminent and patriotic officer, who, by his moral courage on the eve of the battle of Leipsic, had gained for the Allies the decisive advantage of bringing the Prince-Royal's army up to the charge on that eventful day, now rendered to his country the not less important service of preventing a capitulation, which, by restoring twenty-five thousand veteran troops to the standards of Napoleon, might have entirely changed the fate of the war next spring in France.<sup>1</sup>

The fall of Dresden was shortly after followed by that of the other chief fortresses on the Oder and the Vistula. On the 21st November, Stettin, which had been closely blockaded for eight months, and the garrison of which had exhausted their last means of subsistence, surrendered: the troops, still eight thousand strong, were made prisoners of war, and three hundred and fifty guns on the walls and in the magazines fell into the hands of the Allies, who shortly after despatched the blockading force to reinforce the corps of Tauenzien, to which it belonged. Fifteen hundred Dutch troops, who formed part of the garrison, immediately entered the ranks of the Allies—an ominous circumstance, which presaged but too surely

\* "I trust your Royal Highness, with your wonted condescension, will permit me to express the sentiments of Great Britain on a military question, in which it must feel the deepest interest. To all appearance Denmark is now with us, and Marshal Davoust is gone. Should he escape to France by means of any capitulation, I foresee it will affix the deepest stain on the military glory of the army of the north; it would be nothing less than to transport the corps of Davoust from a fatal spot, where its destruction is inevitable, into one in which it might again appear in battle against the Allies. My prince, you have loaded me with your kindness; be assured it is of your glory, of your personal interests, that I am thinking. I will answer for the opinion of my country. It is with the most sensible pain that I have recently heard, even after the assurances to the contrary which you gave me yesterday evening, that General Walmoden has received fresh orders to the effect I so earnestly deprecate."—SIR CHARLES STEWART (now Marquis Londonderry) to the PRINCE-ROYAL, 16th November 1813.



the revolt of Holland, which in effect soon took place. Torgau was not long in following the example of Stettin, although the more recent investment of the place rendered it necessary to have recourse to an actual siege, instead of the more tedious method of blockade. On the 23d October, Tauenzien sat down before its walls; and on the 1st November the investment was completed, and the trenches opened on the 22d. The approaches of the besiegers were proceeding rapidly, when an armistice was agreed to on the 28th, with a view to arranging the terms of a capitulation. But when the French commander discovered that an unconditional surrender was required, he broke off the conferences, and hostilities were resumed.<sup>1</sup>

They were not, however, of long duration. Disease, more terrible than the sword of the enemy, was making the most unheard-of ravages within the walls. Typhus fever, the well-known and never-failing attendant on human suffering, was carrying off the garrison by hundreds daily; while thousands encumbered those awful dens of misery, the military hospitals. Decimated by death, attenuated by suffering, the garrison were in no condition to maintain the place against the impetuous and repeated attacks of the Allies. After a fortnight of open trenches, the outworks were carried by assault, and the rampart seriously shaken by the fire of the besiegers' artillery. The governor, Dutaillis, finding the troops under his command incapable of manning the works, from the extraordinary ravages of fever, was obliged to surrender at discretion. Including the sick in the hospitals, the number who were captured was ten thousand, the poor remains of eighteen thousand who had sought refuge there after the retreat of the Grand Army from the Elbe. But such was the danger of contagion in that great pest-house, that the Allies did not venture to enter the fortress till the 10th of January. In Torgau was taken the whole reserve park of the Grand Army, the want of which had been so severely felt at the close of the battle of Leipsic, including two hundred and eighty-seven guns; but these advantages were dearly purchased by the terrible epidemic which, issuing from its wo-struck walls, made the circuit, in the following years,<sup>2</sup> of every country of

CHAP.  
LXXXII.  
1813.

Oct. 23.

Nov. 22.  
Nov. 28.  
1 Bout. 179.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
167. Die  
Grosse Chron.  
i. 1161, 1169.

41.  
Dreadful  
pestilence  
there, and  
fall of the  
place.  
Dec. 6.

Dec. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1169, 1171.  
Plotio, ii.  
547. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
168. Bout.  
186.

CHAP.  
LXXXII.

1813.

42.  
Operations  
before  
Dantzic  
during 1813.

Europe, until, among the Venetian paupers in 1816, and the Irish poor in 1817, it encountered a starving population, where, amidst equal suffering, it swept away numbers proportionally greater into the common charnel-house of mortality.\*

During the course of this terrible struggle on the Elbe, the fortresses on the Vistula, still remaining in the hands of the French, have almost escaped observation ; but the time was now approaching when their defence, after a siege or blockade of nearly twelve months, could no longer be prolonged. Rapp, as already mentioned, had done every thing which firm resolution and rigorous discipline could effect, to restore order among the motley group of five-and-thirty thousand men, who had taken refuge in Dantzic after the Moscow retreat ; and in some degree he had succeeded. Disease, however, as usual after all these disastrous retreats, soon began to make ravages in the interior of its walls, and, before the end of January 1813, six thousand were in hospital. The garrison, nevertheless, was still so powerful, that the Russian blockading force, which was not of greater strength, and composed chiefly of landwehr, was unable to confine it within the circuit of the walls ; and in the course of January and February several severe actions took place, with various success, but without the besiegers being able to complete the investment. Early in March, the Russians, being reinforced by the troops who had successfully terminated the blockade of Pillau, amounting to six thousand men, made a vigorous attack on the fortified posts held by the French in advance of the city, particularly Langenfurth, Stotzenberg, and D'Ohra ; but they were repulsed after a severe action, with the loss of fifteen hundred men. Encouraged by this success, Rapp shortly after made a sortie to collect subsistence, which was beginning to fail, in which he in a great measure succeeded, and made himself master of an hospital of the enemy, containing several hundred sick and wounded.<sup>1</sup>

Disease, however, now came to the aid of the Allies ;

\* The author witnessed the poor of Venice labouring under this epidemic in 1816, and the Irish prostrated by its ravages in 1817. The imagination of Dante himself never conceived any thing so terrible as the scenes of woe then exhibited under that frightful scourge—the sad bequest to humanity of the ambition and the wars of Napoleon.

March 24.  
1 Vict. et  
Cong. xxii.  
169, 171.  
Vaud. i. 244,  
245. Bout.  
179. Die  
Grosse Chron.  
i. 1142, 1147.

and the accumulation of so many troops—some of them bringing the seeds of contagion with their columns into the fortress—began to produce the most fatal ravages. In the end of April, the health of the garrison having been in some degree restored, a sortie was hazarded into the island of Nehrung, the fertility and agricultural riches of which promised to afford considerable resources for the garrison. The Russians, three thousand strong, tried to stop the columns, but they were defeated with heavy loss, and the French advanced eight leagues along the island, making spoil of all its provisions, and bringing back grain in abundance to the fortress, besides five hundred head of cattle. In the course of May, however, the besieging army received considerable reinforcements from the interior of Russia, and the adjoining provinces of Prussia; and in the beginning of June, the Duke of Würtemberg, who had assumed the command, had thirty thousand combatants under his banners. Yet notwithstanding this, Rapp, on the 9th June, again made a sortie at the head of fifteen thousand men; and although defeated at some points, he succeeded in bringing considerable stores of forage and growing rye into the fortress. In this affair, both parties lost about twelve hundred men. Hostilities were soon after terminated by the armistice of Pleswitz, and not again resumed till the end of August—the fortress, in the intermediate period, having been revictualled every five days, by commissioners conjointly appointed for that purpose, in terms of the convention. The armistice terminated on the 28th, and several obstinate conflicts took place, on the following morning, at the advanced posts; in the course of which, though success was balanced, the besiegers sensibly gained ground, and contracted the circle within which the posts of the besieged were confined. During the whole of September repeated sorties were made by the garrison, some of which were successful and others defeated; but the besieged, after a most honourable resistance, were at length thrown back at all points into the fortress; and the Duke of Würtemberg having received considerable reinforcements, and a regular battering train, operations in form commenced in the first week of October.<sup>1</sup>

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43.

Operations there till the commencement of the regular siege in October. April 29.

June 9.

June 10.

Aug. 29.

Sept. 16, 24, 29.

1 Vaud. i.  
246. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
178, 179.  
Dartois,  
Siège de  
Dantzic, 54,  
72. Plotho,  
ii. 537, 539.

The bombardment commenced on the 8th, before the

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44.

Continuation  
of the siege.  
Oct. 16.

breaching batteries were ready, or any impression had been made even upon the external works of the place. With such vigour was the fire kept up, that in a short time the town was in flames in several places. During the distraction produced by these conflagrations, the principal attack was directed against the suburb called Scholtenhausen, and the redoubts which covered it; and, after a vigorous cannonade for some days, the besiegers succeeded in establishing themselves in that outwork, though after sustaining a loss of a thousand men. From this advanced position the bombardment was resumed with redoubled vigour and terrible efficacy: soon the flames broke out in eight-and-twenty different quarters; the principal magazines in the place, both of provisions and clothing, were consumed; and, notwithstanding the extent of their supplies, provisions began to grow scarce. The body of the place, however, was still uninjured: the rampart was unshaken, and the firm spirit of Rapp could not brook the idea of submission.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dartois,  
Siège de  
Dantzic, 12,  
18. Vaud. i.  
246. Jom.  
iv. 494. Die  
Grosse Chron.  
i. 1149, 1150.

At length, in the beginning of November, the regular siege commenced, and parallels were begun to be run with great vigour; and, although the approaches of the besiegers were sensibly retarded by the heroic exploits of a small corps of volunteers, who more than once carried terror and conflagration into the centre of the besiegers' lines, yet their progress was rapid and alarming. All the external works of the place fell successively into the enemy's hands: a naval officer, who was despatched to make the Emperor acquainted with the distressed state of the garrison, was unable, after the most heroic efforts, to penetrate farther than Copenhagen: desertion was taking place to an alarming extent, and all hopes of being relieved having vanished with the battle of Leipsic, Rapp at length consented to capitulate; stipulating, however, that the garrison should be permitted to retire to France, on condition of not serving again till exchanged. The garrison still consisted of sixteen thousand men, of whom about one-half were French, and the remainder Germans and Poles. By the capitulation, it was provided that the ratification of the Emperor of Russia should be obtained; and he having refused to sanction the condition relative to the return of the garrison to France,<sup>2</sup> the same offer

45.  
Fall of the  
place.  
Nov. 3.

Nov. 7.

Nov. 9.

Nov. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1149, 1152.  
Dartois,  
Siège de  
Dantzic, 79,  
115. Vaud.  
i. 246. Jom.  
iv. 494.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
182, 185.

was made to them as had been made to St Cyr, that they should be reinstated in the fortress in the same position in which they were before they left it. This was strictly legal in this case, as the sanction of the Emperor had been expressly stipulated for in the convention ; and as it was not agreed to, Rapp and the French were conducted as prisoners of war into Russia, but almost all the auxiliaries immediately entered the Allied ranks.

The lesser places still held by the French on the Vistula, having exhausted their last means of subsistence, surrendered shortly after. The garrison of Zamosc, three thousand strong, capitulated on the 22d December : that of Modlin, with twelve hundred men, three days after ; so that the tricolor flag no longer waved to the eastward of the Oder. About the same time General Dalton, who commanded the French garrison in Erfurth, finding himself not sufficiently strong to defend the wide circuit of the walls, retired into the citadel of St Petersburg, on the rocky summit of which he still maintained himself when the city was surrendered by capitulation in the beginning of January. At the close of the campaign, France retained only, of her immense possessions beyond the Rhine, Hamburg, Magdeburg, and Wittenberg, on the Elbe ; Cüstrin and Glogau on the Oder ; and the citadels of Erfurth and Würzburg. All the rest of the places garrisoned or influenced by her arms, had been torn from her ; the Confederation of the Rhine was dissolved, and its forces were marching under the Allied banners ; and, reflux over the bridges of Mayence, eighty thousand men, with two hundred guns, sad and dejected, had retired into France—the poor remains of four hundred thousand combatants, with twelve hundred cannon, who, three months before, still held the scales of fortune equal on the banks of the Elbe. The contest in Germany was over ; French domination beyond the Rhine was at an end ; thirty thousand prisoners taken on the field, and eighty thousand since surrendered in garrison, constituted the proud trophies of the battle of Leipsic.<sup>1</sup>

The universal fermentation produced in Europe by the deliverance of Germany, was not long of spreading to the DUTCH PROVINCES. The yoke of Napoleon, universally

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1813.

46.

Surrender of  
the forts of  
Erfurth,  
Zamosc, and  
Modlin.  
Dec. 22.

Dec. 25.

Dec. 20.

Jan. 6, 1814.

<sup>1</sup> Vaud.  
247. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
180, 185.  
Bout. 180,  
181. Die  
Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1127, 1141.  
Richter, ii.  
411. Plottho,  
ii. 524, 526.

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LXXXII.

1813.

47.

Universal  
discontent in  
Holland.

grievous from the enormous pecuniary exactions with which it was attended, and the wasting military conscriptions to which it immediately led, had been in a peculiar manner felt as oppressive in Holland, from the maritime and commercial habits of the people, and the total stoppage of all their sources of industry, which the naval war and long-continued blockade of their coasts had occasioned. They had tasted for nearly twenty years of the last drop of humiliation in the cup of the vanquished—that of being compelled themselves to aid in upholding the system which was exterminating their resources, and to purchase with the blood of their children the ruin of their country. These feelings, which had for years existed in such intensity, as to have rendered revolt inevitable but for the evident hopelessness at all former times of the attempt, could no longer be restrained after the battle of Leipsic had thrown down the colossus of French external power, and the approach of the Allied standards to their frontiers had opened to the people the means of salvation. From the Hanse Towns the flame of independence spread to the nearest cities of the old United Provinces; and the small number of French troops in the country at once encouraged revolt and paved the way for external aid.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Die Grosse Chron. i. 1114, 1117. Bout. 174. Ann. Reg. 1813, 160, 161. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 164. Better, i. 217.

48.

Which  
breaks out  
into open  
insurrection.

Nov. 15.

At this period, the whole troops which Napoleon had in Holland did not exceed six thousand French, and two regiments of Germans, upon whose fidelity to their colours little reliance could be placed. Upon the approach of the Allied troops under Bulow, who advanced by the road of Munster, and Winzingerode, who soon followed from the same quarter, the douaniers all withdrew from the coast, the garrison of Amsterdam retired, and the whole disposable force of the country was concentrated at Utrecht, to form a corps of observation, and act according to circumstances. This was the signal for a general revolt. At Amsterdam, the troops were no sooner gone than the inhabitants rose in insurrection, deposed the Imperial authorities, hoisted the orange flag, and established a provisional government with a view to the restoration of the ancient order of things; yet not violently or with cruelty, but with the calmness and composure which attest the exercise of social rights by a

people long habituated to their enjoyment. The same change took place, at the same time and in the same orderly manner, at Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Delft, Leyden, Haarlem, and the other chief towns; the people, everywhere, amidst cries of "*Orange Boven!*" and universal rapture, mounted the orange cockade, and reinstated the ancient authorities; and after twenty years of foreign domination and suffering, the glorious spectacle was exhibited, of a people peaceably regaining their independence, without shedding a drop of blood, and, unstained either by passion or vengeance, reverting to the institutions of former times.<sup>1</sup> \*

Military and political consequences of the highest importance, immediately followed this uncontrollable outbreak of public enthusiasm. A deputation from Holland waited on the Prince Regent of England and the Prince of Orange, in London: the latter shortly after embarked on board an English line-of-battle ship, the *Warrior*, and on the 27th landed at Scheveling, from whence he proceeded to the Hague. Meantime the French troops and coast-guards, who had concentrated at Utrecht, seeing that the general effervescence was not as yet supported by any solid military force, and that the people, though they had all hoisted the orange flag, were not aided by any corps of the Allies, recovered from their consternation, and made a general forward movement against Amsterdam. Before they got there, however, a body of three hundred Cossacks had reached that capital, where they were received with enthusiastic joy: and this advanced guard was soon after followed by General Benkendorf's brigade, which, after travelling by post from Zwoll to Harderwyk, embarked at the latter place, and, by the aid of a favourable wind, reached Amsterdam on the 1st December.<sup>2</sup>

\* The following proclamation, issued by the provisional government of the Hague in name of the Prince of Orange, is singularly descriptive of this memorable and bloodless revolution:—" *Orange Boven!* Holland is free; the Allies advance on Utrecht, the English have been invited, the French are flying on all sides. The sea is opened: commerce revives: the spirit of party has ceased—*what we have suffered is pardoned and forgiven.* Able and intelligent men have been called to the helm of government, who have invited the prince to resume the national sovereignty. We join our forces to those of the Allies, to compel the enemy to make peace; the people will ere long have a day of rejoicing at the expense of Government; but every species of pillage or excess is absolutely forbidden. Every one returns thanks to God: old times have returned. *Orange Boven!*"—See CAPEFIGUE, x. 278, 279, note.

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<sup>1</sup> Valentini,  
ii. 58.  
Capef. x.  
278, 279.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 164, 165.  
Bout. 174,  
175. Ann.  
Reg. 1813,  
160, 161.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1116, 1119.

49.

Landing of  
the Prince of  
Orange, and  
arrival of the  
Russian out-  
posts.  
Nov. 27.

Nov. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Val. ii. 58,  
59. Koch,  
i. 55.  
Bout. 175.  
Ann. Reg.  
1813, 161.  
162.

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1813.

50.

General ex-  
pulsion of the  
French from  
the country.  
Dec. 2.  
Nov. 23.

Nov. 29.

Nov. 30.

<sup>1</sup> Koch, i.  
56. Val. ii.  
58, 59.  
Dec. 1.

Ann. Reg.  
1813, 161,  
162. Bout.  
175, 176.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 165.  
Die Grosse  
Chron. i.  
1119, 1121.

The Russian general immediately advanced against the forts of Mayder and Halfweg, of which he made himself master, taking twenty pieces of cannon and six hundred prisoners; while on the eastern frontier, General Oppen, with Bulow's advanced guards, carried Dornbourg by assault on the 23d, and, advancing against Arnheim, threw the garrison, three thousand strong, which strove to prevent the place being invested, with great loss back into the town. Next day, Bulow himself came up with the main strength of his corps, and, as the ditches were still dry, hazarded an escalade, which proved entirely successful; the greater part of the garrison retiring to Nimeguen, by the bridge of the Rhine. The French troops, finding themselves thus threatened on all sides, withdrew altogether from Holland: the fleet at the Texel hoisted the orange flag, with the exception of Admiral Verhuel, who, with a body of marines that still proved faithful to Napoleon, threw himself with honourable fidelity into the fort of the Texel. Amsterdam, amidst transports of enthusiasm, received the beloved representative of the House of Orange. Before the close of the year, the tricolor flag floated only on Bergen-op-zoom and a few of the southern frontier fortresses; and Europe beheld the prodigy of the seat of war having been transferred in a single year from the banks of the Niemen to those of the Scheldt.<sup>1</sup>

51.  
Operations  
in Italy dur-  
ing this cam-  
paign.

To complete the picture of this memorable year, there only remains to give a sketch of the Italian campaign, and of the operations of Wellington in the Spanish peninsula. The former can be but a sketch, for the operations of the opposite armies, though numerous and complicated, led to no material result; it was on the fields of Leipsic and Vitoria that the fate of the French empire was decided, and on them that the broad light of history requires to be thrown. Yet the narrative, how brief soever, will not be without its interest; for it will recall the memory of other days, when the fortunes of the young Republic played around the bayonets of Napoleon's grenadiers: and after a long sojourn amidst the rough sounds of the German regions, there is a charm in the sweet accents of the Italian tongue.

Eugene Beauharnais, as already mentioned, retired



from the Grand Army in Germany when Napoleon took the command, and he arrived at Milan on the 18th of May. His first care was to organise an army in Lombardy, which might put him in a condition to inspire feelings of apprehension in the cabinet of Vienna, or resist any attempt which it might make to recover, by force of arms, its lost and long-coveted possessions in Italy. Napoleon, by a decree, early in May intrusted the formation of the new army of Italy to his viceroy, and it was to be composed entirely of native soldiers, or conscripts from the French departments adjoining the Alps. Though this ordinance bespoke strongly the confidence of the Emperor in his Italian subjects, and might be supposed to increase the patriotic spirit which was developed in the north of Italy, yet it was attended with one obvious danger, which came to tell with signal severity upon the fortunes of the empire in its last moments. These soldiers were bound by no tie to the tramontane regions, and might be expected all to desert if the fortune of war should compel the French eagles to retire across the Alps. When the Viceroy returned to Italy, he found only the skeletons of a few regiments, and three hundred officers and non-commissioned officers, who had been forwarded by post from Spain—the whole forces of the kingdom of Italy had perished in Russia, or been marched to the Elbe. But his energy and activity overcame every difficulty; and, by the beginning of July, fifty-two thousand men were in arms, of whom forty-five thousand infantry, and fifteen hundred horse, were present with the eagles.<sup>1</sup>

On the other side, the Austrians were not idle. Early in July a respectable force was collected on the frontiers of Illyria, under the orders of Field-marshal Hiller; and before the end of the month it was raised to seven divisions, mustering fully fifty thousand combatants, of a description much superior to the Italian conscripts. In addition to this they raised the landwehr of Illyria and Croatia, and, reinforced by several thousands of these hardy mountaineers, commenced the campaign the moment they received intelligence of the armistice being denounced on the 17th August. At this period the viceroy occupied the following positions. Two divisions

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1813.

52.

Eugene's dispositions and measures for the defence of Lombardy.

May 10.

<sup>1</sup> Vignolles, Précis des Opér. des Armées d'Italie en 1813, 1814, 9, 12. Vict et Conq. xxii 188, 192. Norvins, Portf. de 1813, ii. 464, 465.

53.

Austrian forces, and position of both armies.

CHAP.  
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1813.

<sup>1</sup> Vignolles,  
19, 24. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
192, 195.  
Norvins, Rec.  
de 1813, ii.  
465, 466.

under Grenier were stationed between Udina and Gorizia; and the remainder of the army, under Verdier, Marcognet, Gratian, and Palombini, stretched by the left by Palma Nuova to the blood-stained heights of Tarwis and Villach, occupying thus the whole eastern passes from Italy into Germany. Hiller's force, directly in front, extended from opposite Villach on his right to Agram on his left, where he had concentrated two divisions; and the ferment in the provinces of Croatia, ceded to France, already promised the most favourable reception to the Austrians, if they invaded that portion of the spoils which France had won from the hereditary states.<sup>1</sup>

54.  
The Austrians commence the campaign, and gain considerable successes.

The Austrians being the stronger party, were the first to commence hostilities. On the 17th, two columns passed the frontier stream of the Save at Agram, and directed their march towards Karlstadt and Fiume. General Jeannin, who commanded in that quarter, at first made preparations for resistance; but finding himself speedily surrounded by an insurrection, which broke out on all sides at the sight of the much-loved Austrian standards, he was obliged to abandon the first city and fall back on the second. This retrograde movement threw the whole Illyrian provinces into a blaze: all Croatia was soon in insurrection; the flame spread along the Dalmatian shore; and, as far as the mouths of the Cattaro, the whole mountaineers were in arms to throw off the yoke of France. This vehement ebullition, coupled with the numerical inferiority of Eugène, who found himself assailed by above fifty thousand German troops, for whom his newly-raised Italians were no adequate match, rendered it impossible for him to maintain his ground along the whole frontier. In consequence, abandoning Fiume and the whole coast of Illyria, he ascended with the bulk of his forces the course of the Isonzo, and took post in the intrenched camp at Tarwis, hoping to make good the passes till time was afforded for the armaments to be completed in his rear. Meanwhile Villach had been evacuated by the Italian troops; but no sooner did Eugène's reinforcement arrive in that direction than it was retaken by three French battalions: again it was carried by the Austrians,<sup>2</sup> and finally gained by

Aug. 24.  
Aug. 29.  
Aug. 30.  
<sup>2</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
196, 197.  
Norvins,  
Portfeuille,  
ii. 466, 467.

Eugene, who established his headquarters in that city. But these advantages were obtained by denuding the right and maritime provinces, and Fiume was occupied by the Austrians under General Nugent, without opposition, in the end of August.

On the 26th of August General Pino attacked the Austrian intrenchments on Mont Leobel; but the Italians failed entirely against that formidable bulwark, and were thrown back in utter disorder on Krainburg. Eugene brought them back to the charge in greater force, and the Austrians were driven out. The design of Hiller at this period was to have forced the enemy to evacuate the passes in his front in the Julian Alps, and retire behind the line of the Isonzo; and with that view, after the loss of Villach, he had fortified Feistritz, from which point he could at pleasure either menace Tarwis or turn and descend the valley of the Upper Save. To frustrate this design, Eugene directed an assault on this fortified post, and, after a sharp combat, Grenier, who commanded the assailants, carried it, with a loss to the enemy of eight hundred men. Encouraged by this success, the Viceroy made a general attack on the enemy's positions at all points. He met, however, with a severe check on his right, where General Belotti, with a brigade, was totally defeated, with a loss of twelve hundred men; and his right wing, disconcerted by this disaster, fell back, closely pursued by the Austrians, towards Trieste, while the insurrection in their favour spread over the whole of Istria. The Viceroy was obliged, therefore, to remain on the defensive; but, like a skilful general, he turned it to the best advantage. Observing that Hiller had directed the weight of his forces to the sea-coast on his left, to follow up his successes in the direction of Trieste, he moved in the same direction, and succeeded, after several actions, in expelling the enemy from Fiume, where General Pino established himself. So sudden was this attack, that the Archduke Maximilian, who was in the town at the time, with difficulty saved himself on board Admiral Freemantle's vessel.<sup>1</sup>

These balanced successes on either side led to no decisive result, and, after a month's active hostilities, the position of the contending parties was not materially

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1813.

55.

Obstinate resistance of the Viceroy, and his successes against them.  
Sept. 2.

Sept. 6.

Sept. 8.

Sept. 15.

<sup>1</sup> Norvins, Port. de 1813, ii. 467. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 203, 204. Vignolles, 24, 36.

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56.

The French  
are driven  
back into the  
plain of  
Friuli.  
Sept. 19.  
Sept. 21.  
Sept. 25.

Oct. 8.

Oct. 4.

Oct. 7.

Oct. 8.

Oct. 12.

Oct. 13.

Oct. 11.

1 Jom. iv.  
497. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
209, 211.  
Vignolles,  
37, 44.

different from what it had been at their commencement. But events were now on the wing which gave a decisive advantage to the Austrians, and threw back the Italian army behind the Adige. Large reinforcements, chiefly from the landwehr of the adjoining provinces, reached Hiller in the middle of September; he passed the Drave on the 19th of that month, and soon gained considerable advantages over the divisions of Grenier and Verdier, on the French left, in the Julian Alps. The object of this transference of active operations from the Austrian left on the sea-coast, to their right in the mountains, was soon apparent. The treaty of Ried, between the cabinet of Vienna and that of Munich, which secured the accession of Bavaria to the alliance—again put the House of Hapsburg in possession of the great central fortress of the Tyrol, and enabled the enemy to turn the Italian valleys by their upper extremity, amidst the Alpine snows. Hiller was not slow in turning to the best account this signal advantage. Directing a considerable part of his force up the valley of the Drave, which entered the Tyrol by Prunecken; and, moving forward towards the valley of the Adige, by the bridge of Laditch, Brixen, and the scenery immortalised in the Tyrolese war,\* he himself remained in the centre to force the fortified posts held by the enemy at Tarwis. A vigorous attack was made by Hiller in person on the position of Tarwis, from which, after several obstinate conflicts, the Viceroy was at length driven with great loss. Despairing now of maintaining his ground in the hills, Eugene withdrew his troops, not without considerable difficulty, down all the valleys, abandoning altogether the crest of the mountains, and concentrated them on the banks of the Tagliamento, at the entrance of the plain of Friuli; while, by a decree from Gorizia, he directed the levy of fifteen thousand additional conscripts, to supply the loss of an equal number who had perished by fatigue, sickness, or the sword, during this consuming warfare of posts in the Alps.<sup>1</sup>

The retreat, once commenced, could not easily be terminated. Encouraged by the accession of Bavaria, and the enthusiastic support of the Tyrolese, who crowded with shouts of joy to their standards, the Austrians

\* *Ante*, Chaps. lviii. lx.

pressed every where on his retiring columns; and it was soon evident that the line of the Adige was the only one where a stand could be made. In contemplation of that event, the garrison of Palma Nuova was strengthened by three battalions, that of Venice augmented to twelve thousand men; while, to delay as long as possible the discouragement and disaffection which he was well aware the retreat of the army would produce in Italy, the Viceroy determined to maintain to the last extremity the line of the Isonzo. So long was the circuit which the troops required to make by Brixen and Trent, that he was not without hope that the new levies might be brought forward before the enemy threatened Verona. But so rapid was the march of events, that this was soon found to be impossible. On the 25th September, indeed, George Giffenga, with an Italian division, had gained some advantages over the enemy, and reoccupied Brixen; but the hourly increasing strength of the Germans, whose columns were now augmented by a vast concourse of volunteers from all parts of the Tyrol, soon compelled him to evacuate that town, and retreat successively by Bolzano and Lavis to Trent.<sup>1</sup>

The latter town was next day evacuated, and its castle invested by the victorious Austrians; while the dispirited Italians retired to Volano, and the famous defiles of the Adige above Verona. Eugene finding his rear thus threatened, felt that the line of the Isonzo was no longer tenable. Throwing garrisons, therefore, into a few forts as he retired rapidly across the Tagliamento, and after sustaining a severe defeat on the part of one of his divisions at St Daniel, he arrived on the 30th at Sproziano on the Piave. Meanwhile a bloody combat took place at Volano, which, after a gallant resistance, was carried by the Austrians, the Italians falling back to the still stronger and well-known position at the entrance of the pass of Serravalle. Here they were attacked next day: the Italian troops, now thoroughly discouraged, made a very feeble resistance, and were driven in utter disorder to the plateau of *Rivoli*. The recollection of Napoleon's glory was unable to arrest even for a day, on this memorable spot, the rapidity of his fall;<sup>2</sup> Rivoli was abandoned almost as soon as it had been occupied, and the enemy

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57.

General result of the campaign in the mountains.

Sept. 25.

Oct. 15.

<sup>1</sup> Vignolles,  
Camp. de  
1813, en  
Italie, 52,  
58. Vaud.  
Guerre  
d'Italie, 46,  
54.

58.

Entire evacuation of the Italian Tyrol.  
Oct. 16.

Oct. 23.

Oct. 26.

Oct. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Vignolles,  
52, 61. Vaud.  
Guerre  
d'Italie, en  
1813, 46, 54.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 214, 217.

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Oct. 28.  
Oct. 31.

was driven back out of the hills to the very gates of Verona ; while two days after, the citadel of Trent, after a short but active siege, surrendered with its garrison of five hundred men.

59.  
Concluding  
operations of  
the campaign  
in Italy.

Oct. 31.

This skilful operation of Hiller, in turning the French line of defence on the Piave by the mountains, rendered a further retreat indispensable, and soon brought their standards in the plain back to the Adige. To cover this retrograde movement, which was eminently hazardous in the level country in presence of a superior and victorious enemy, the Viceroy on the 31st made a vigorous attack on Bassano, which had fallen into the hands of the Austrians, and the situation of which, at the entrance of the Val Sugana and the defiles of the Brenta, promised to secure the army from molestation on the side where most danger was to be apprehended, and carried the place with a loss to the Austrians of eight hundred men. Thus secured, the Italian army continued its retreat across the plain from the Piave to the Adige, while the grand park of artillery was directed to Vallegio and Padua. On the 4th November the Viceroy's headquarters were established at Verona ; the garrisons were withdrawn from Bassano, and all the posts to the eastward of that city. Finally, the campaign which had been begun on the Niemen and the Vistula, terminated on the Rhine and the Adige.<sup>1</sup>

Nov. 4.  
<sup>1</sup> Vignolles,  
73, 81. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
219, 220.  
Norvins, ii.  
468, 469.60.  
Surrender of  
Trieste, and  
conquest of  
Dalmatia.

Oct. 15.

The withdrawal of the Italian troops, however, behind this river, proved fatal to the French power on the whole eastern shores of the Adriatic. General Nugent, with the left wing of the Austrian army, speedily overran the shores of the gulf of Trieste, and invested that city in the middle of October. The operations, powerfully aided by an English squadron and auxiliary force from Sicily, were pushed with uncommon vigour ; an important outwork, called the Old Powder Magazine, was carried by assault by the combined British and Austrian forces on the 22d ; and the breaching batteries being then established, a most vigorous fire was kept up on the citadel, which soon produced such an effect that the works were entirely ruined, and the place being no longer tenable, surrendered at discretion on the 31st, with twelve hundred men, and very valuable magazines. Nor were the Allies less successful in Dalmatia, where the Austrian troops, powerfully assisted

Oct. 31.

by an insurrection of the inhabitants on the one side, and by the British marines on the other, speedily overcame all resistance. So early as the middle of October, they were masters of all the forts at the mouths of the Cattaro; a fortnight after, the town of Knin was taken by assault; ere long, the garrison of Sebenico revolted, and surrendered it to the Austrians; Spalatro was taken the same day, and the entire reduction of the province and eastern shores of the Adriatic effected, by the reduction of the strong fortress of Zara, which capitulated, after a severe cannonade of thirteen days, to the combined Austrian and British forces on the 9th December. Meanwhile Palma Nuova was besieged, and Venice invested. The strength, however, of the garrison of the latter city, which, including the marine forces, was twelve thousand strong, and the magnitude of the flotilla, mounting above three hundred guns, which defended the lagunæ and approaches to the queen of the Adriatic, rendered its reduction a matter of time and difficulty. Yet the whole continental possessions of the old Republic, as far as the Adige, were occupied by the Austrians, whose forces extended to Ferrara and the banks of the Po.<sup>1</sup>

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1813.

Oct. 16.

Oct. 30.

Nov. 2.

Dec. 9.

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
1813, 165.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 220, 221.  
Vign. 94,  
102.

Such was the memorable campaign in central Europe of 1813, the most fruitful in great events, and the most momentous in its consequences, which had occurred in the annals of mankind. The armies of Cæsar or Scipio would have formed mere corps d'armée in its vast array; the forces of Tamerlane or Genghis-khan would have been easily dispersed by a few discharges of its stupendous artillery. Disciplined skill neither appeared there in miniature array as in the Grecian republics, nor barbarian valour under the guidance of unskilled energy as in the hosts of Bajazet or Attila. Civilisation and knowledge had exhausted their resources for the contest; ambition poured forth the accumulations of ages for its support; barbaric valour strained the energy of the desert for the interests it involved. The last reserves, the *arrière-ban* of Europe and Asia, were engaged in the struggle. On the field of battle, beside the Tartars and Bashkirs of the East were to be seen the tender youth of Europe, only recently torn from the embraces of maternal love: in its maintenance were exhausted all that the military force of France

61.  
Reflections  
on this cam-  
paign.

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1813.

could extort of wealth from the present sufferings of continental Europe, and all that the industry of England had accumulated of credit during past centuries of pacific exertion. Nor were the skill and science of the leaders in this memorable struggle inferior to the prodigious forces they were called to command, or the vital interests for which they contended. The genius of Napoleon, equal to that of Cæsar or Hannibal, all but overbalanced the heroism of Alexander, and the science of Gneisenau, which rivalled those of Pompey and Scipio; and the cause for which they contended was not the conquest of provinces or the plunder of cities, but the liberation of the human race from unbearable oppression, or the establishment of universal dominion upon an immoveable foundation.

62.  
Military  
ability displayed by  
Napoleon in  
this campaign.

Great as were the disasters which attended Napoleon in the course of this memorable campaign, and rapid as was the fall of his power during its continuance, it may be doubted whether he ever, on any previous occasion, displayed greater abilities, either in the general conception of his designs, or in their rapid and vigorous execution. His system of strategy was the same as it had been at Austerlitz and Jena; and, if it led to very different results, it was only because he was now opposed in a totally different manner, and resisted with a spirit commensurate to the attack. His general ideas for the conduct of the campaign, both in its outset at Lützen and Bautzen, and in its subsequent stages, during the protracted and desperate struggle on the Elbe, were distinguished by all his usual vigour of conception and boldness of execution. And, although the obstinate tenacity with which he clung to that river involved him latterly in the most dreadful reverses, it is the general, and seems to be the just opinion among his ablest military historians, that, situated as he was, he could not have done better; that it was the last defensible position where the empire of Germany could be maintained;\* that a retreat to the

\* "The abandonment of Dresden and Saxony would have decided the defection of the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, and enabled all the Allied armies to unite on the left bank of the Elbe; a fatal result, which would have taken away his last chance of fortune. On the other hand, by remaining on the Elbe, he had a central point which intercepted all the direct communications of the different Allied armies, and put him in a situation to take advantage of any



Rhine, though with undiminished forces, would immediately have been attended by the defection of all the states of the Rhenish Confederacy ; and that the risks were well worth incurring, which retained one-half of Europe to his standards.

If Napoleon's conduct in tactics, and on the field of battle, during this campaign, is considered, it will often appear worthy of still more unqualified commendation. The admirable rapidity with which he took advantage of his central position on the Elbe, to defeat the formidable assault of the Allied sovereigns on Dresden, was equalled by the felicitous conception of the attack next day on both wings of his opponents : a measure unlike his ordinary tactics, unlooked-for by them, and therefore the more likely to meet with decisive success : while at the same time, from the strength of the fortress in the centre, it was attended with little danger to himself. Though overwhelmed by superior numbers and a moral energy which nothing could withstand at Leipsic, the gallantry of his resistance, the heroism of his troops, are worthy of the most unreserved admiration : the more so that they wanted the stimulus of hope, the recollection of success ; and that they fought, at least on the second day, with the mournful conviction that all was lost. Much as we may admire the redoubtable conqueror who struck down his opponents with his iron gauntlet at Austerlitz and Jena, there was as much vigour and resolution displayed on the field of Bautzen, or under the walls of Dresden : the central charge at Wachau was equal to that which decided the fate of Austria at Wagram ; the daring intrepidity of the Beresina was again displayed in the forest of Hanau ; and if his opponents had been of the same mould on the Elbe that they were at Ulm or Rivoli, the destinies of the world would have been irrevocably decided in his favour on the Saxon plains.

Nevertheless, nothing can be more certain than that Napoleon committed the most enormous errors in the course of this campaign, and that his conduct on more than one occasion was such, that if it had occurred on the part of any of his lieutenants, he would have made them

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1813.

63.  
The skill of  
his tactics on  
the field of  
battle.

false manœuvres they might fall into, to beat them in detail."—BOUTOURLIN,  
*Camp. de 1813*, 91, 92.

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LXXXII.

1813.

64.

The signal  
and inexcusable errors  
he committed.

lose their heads. In fact, when we recollect that, at the resumption of hostilities in the middle of August, he had four hundred thousand combatants and twelve hundred guns concentrated under his immediate direction on the Elbe, besides three hundred thousand more who maintained the contest in Italy and Spain ;\* and that, of this immense force, he led back only eighty thousand men and two hundred guns across the Rhine in the beginning of November, we are at a loss, at first sight, to conceive how it was possible, that in so short a time so vast a host, hitherto always victorious (save with England) in pitched battles, could have been so entirely discomfited and overthrown. The killed and wounded, and the prisoners taken in the different battles, will not explain the difficulty, for they did not amount to a third of the number ; and although the unheeded ravages of the bivouac and the hospital always cut off more than the sword of the enemy, yet this source of diminution was common to both armies, and could have made no material difference on the fortunes of either. Napoleon managed matters so, that he rendered the prizes of victory, enormous beyond all parallel to the conquerors. Thirty thousand prisoners on the spot and ninety thousand more taken in the fortresses, whom it virtually surrendered to the enemy, constituted the proud trophies of the battle of Leipsic ; and, marvellous as were the conquests which followed the thunderbolt of Jena, they were as nothing compared to those which attended the shock of that mighty field which at one blow prostrated the French empire, and threw back the tricolor flag from the Vistula to the Rhine.

The faults in generalship committed by Napoleon during this campaign, were of such a kind, as to be inexplicable on any other supposition than that they were the necessary result and natural concomitant of his system of war, when met by a worthy and adequate spirit of resist-

\* The warmest panegyrists of Napoleon admit this, and even estimate at a higher amount the total of the military force then at his disposal. "His military power," says Napier, "was rather broken and divided than lessened ; for it is certain that the number of men employed in 1813, was infinitely greater than in 1812. In the latter four hundred thousand, but in the former seven hundred thousand men and twelve hundred field-pieces, were engaged on different points, exclusive of the armies in Spain. Then, on the Vistula, the Oder, and the Elbe, he had powerful fortresses and numerous garrisons, or rather armies, of strength and goodness to re-establish his ascendancy in Europe."—NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, v. 431.

ance on the part of the enemy. We have the authority of Marshal St Cyr for the assertion, that the light troops of the Allies, by the manner in which they cut off the foraging parties, and intercepted the communications of the French, did them more injury while on the Elbe, than they sustained in all the pitched battles put together;\* and the chief of Napoleon's engineers, General Rogniat, who had access to the whole official documents at headquarters, has stated, that he lost three hundred thousand men by *famine* in Russia in 1812, and one hundred thousand by the same cause in Saxony in 1813.† It is in this incessant wasting away, the necessary result of carrying on a campaign with such enormous multitudes of men, without any adequate magazines or support of a lasting kind, save what they could extract from the suffering population among whom they were placed,—that the real secret of the destruction of Napoleon's power is to be found. The dreadful typhus fever, which in the close of the campaign swept off such unheard-of multitudes in the fortresses on the Elbe, was the natural consequence of the unexampled privations and misery to which he reduced the gallant conscripts who crowded round his standards.

His panegyrists, both on this and the other side of the Channel, who follow the bulletins in ascribing his ruin entirely to the rigour of the Russian winter, would do

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LXXXII.

1813.

65.

Dreadful results of his system of making war maintain war.

\* "The numerous partisans of the enemy committed frightful ravages on our rear: our depots of cavalry were obliged to fall back towards the Rhine to avoid falling into their power; many horses might have gained the army, if it had been possible to allow them to take a few days' repose: nothing could make up for the want of subsistence for the troops and replenishing to the parks. It may safely be affirmed, that these detached corps, as numerous as armies in the time of Turenne, commanded by officers skilled in that species of war, did more injury to Napoleon than the grand Allied armies, and were sufficient of themselves to have consummated his ruin, if he had not instantly adopted the plan of drawing near to the Rhine. The magazines were so thoroughly exhausted, that soldiers, whom a complete ration of good food could hardly have maintained in health, were reduced from the outset of the campaign to half rations, and even this scanty supply was latterly often not furnished."—ST CYR, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 323, 324.

† "From want of magazines, Napoleon suffered to die of famine, in the space of a few months, three hundred thousand men in Russia, and a hundred thousand in Saxony. The soldiers, obliged to separate in search of subsistence, in great part never rejoined their colours: all the bonds of discipline were relaxed; the troops seized every opportunity to disband; the inhabitants of the villages, exasperated by the pillage which went on, rose up and massacred the marauders; and in fine, in the midst of these disorders the armies disappeared, or perished from misery, especially when the war was prolonged for any considerable time on the same theatre."—ROGNIAT, *Chef de Genie à NAPOLEON. Art de la Guerre*, 457.

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LXXXII.

1813.

66.

His enormous  
losses from  
this cause.

<sup>1</sup> Capef. ix.

421, 422.

Chamb. i.

App. No. ii.

well to explain away the fact proved by the records of the War-office at Paris, that the "morning state" at Wiazma on the 3d November 1812, *four days before the frost began*, exhibited a total of somewhat above fifty-five thousand combatants and twelve thousand horses; the poor remains of three hundred thousand soldiers and eighty thousand cavalry, whom Napoleon had led in person across the Niemen.<sup>1</sup>\* It is neither, therefore, in the rigour of the elements, nor the accidents of fortune, that we are to seek the real causes of Napoleon's overthrow, but in the natural consequences of his system of conquest; in the oppressive effects of the execrable maxim, that war should maintain war; and in the impatience of taxation and thirst for plunder, in the rapacious military Republic of which he formed the head; which, by throwing the armies they had on foot upon external spoliation for their support, at once exposed them, the moment the career of conquest was checked, to unheard-of sufferings, and excited unbounded exasperation among every people over whom their authority prevailed.

67.  
His unac-  
countable  
errors.

After making every allowance, however, for the influence of these causes, which, undoubtedly, were mainly instrumental in producing and accelerating the overthrow of the French revolutionary power; it must be admitted that there are some military errors which he committed in this campaign, which are altogether inexplicable. The destruction of Vandamme's corps, which was the beginning of his long train of disasters, was clearly owing to his imprudence in first ordering him to march on Töplitz, with thirty thousand men, to cut off the retreat of a hundred thousand, and then neglecting to support him, when engaged on his perilous mission, by the Young Guard at Pirna. His plan of commencing offensive operations by three armies at the same time, diverging from a centre at Dresden, was, to say the least of it, imprudent and hazardous; for each army was weakened the further it removed from the central point; and none, in case of disaster, could afford any rapid or immediate support to the others. On leaving the Saxon capital, he deposited his reserve park of artillery and ammunition in Torgau, separated himself from his only considerable magazine on

\* *Ante*, Chap. lxxiii. § 124.

the Elbe, in Magdeburg, and left thirty-five thousand men, who might have cast the balance in his favour in the approaching decisive contest, to stand a siege in Dresden with seven days' provisions for the men and three for the horses. At Leipsic, he chose a position to fight, which had an impassable morass, traversed only by a single chaussée, in his rear, thereby violating what he himself has told us is the "first requisite for a field of battle, to have no defiles in its rear." When unable to conquer on the first day, he still clung to his ground, though the vast increase of the Allied force rendered defeat inevitable; he made no preparation whatever for retreat, and threw no bridges over the Elster, though his engineers could have erected twenty in a single night. And he periled his crown and his empire in a conflict with greatly superior forces in that dangerous situation, when a hundred and forty thousand of his veteran soldiers were cooped up in the fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, to be the trophy of the conqueror in case of defeat.

Inexplicable as these military errors must always appear in so sagacious and clear-sighted a general as Napoleon, they are yet, if minutely considered, nothing more than the natural and inevitable result of his system of war, when it was once thoroughly understood, and opposed with a vigour commensurate to the attack. He has himself told us, that on many previous occasions he had been in equal danger, from which he had nevertheless extricated himself not only with credit but with decisive success; and the course he pursued on those occasions had been just as perilous as that which, in 1813, proved his ruin. In the marshes of Arcole in 1796; during the advance to Leoben in 1797; in Moravia, previous to the battle of Austerlitz, in 1805; in Poland, after the defeat of Eylau, in 1807; on the Danube, after the catastrophe of Aspern, in 1809—he was in equal, if not greater peril; and he extricated himself from the difficulties into which his imprudence had brought him, only by a happy audacity, which paralysed or divided his opponents when they had the means of destroying him absolutely within their grasp. He never thought of retreat; he never anticipated defeat where he was in

68.  
The generally  
hazardous  
character of  
his warfare.

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1813.

person with the army—though he provided often carefully for it in the case of his lieutenants: but, dashing boldly forward, he struck at the centre of the enemy's power, without any thought how, in case of disaster, he was to maintain his own. His own words, that "if Alexander had looked to his retreat at Arbela, or Cæsar at Pharsalia, they would never have conquered the world," reveal the ruling principle of his warfare, and explain at once his early triumphs and ultimate disasters.

69.

Causes of its  
early success  
and ultimate  
disaster.

The wide difference between the two in the result of the same audacious system of warfare, is to be ascribed in a great degree to the superior vigour and unanimity with which he was resisted in the later, to what he had been in the earlier stages of his career. It was the incomparable energy with which the people rose in arms in the latter years of the war, the concord which prevailed among the sovereigns, the perseverance with which they carried through their designs, and the disinterestedness with which they sacrificed all separate interests to the general objects of the alliance, which led to its glorious results. And without diminishing the credit due to all in this noble career, and admitting that it was on the Russian reserve that the weight of the contest in its last and most serious stages in general fell, justice must yet admit that the chief glory of the deliverance of Germany is to be ascribed to Prussia; and that, but for the incomparable energy with which her people rose against their oppressors, and which filled the Allied ranks with a host of warriors, beyond all precedent great for the amount of its population,\* the first onset of Napoleon on the banks of the Elbe never could have been resisted, and the grand alliance which effected the deliverance of Europe would never have been formed.

"I shall not," says Gibbon, "be readily accused of

\* Prussia, after its partition in 1807 by the treaty of Tilsit, possessed only 5,034,000 inhabitants. In 1813, she had 200,000 men in arms, and actually in the field, independent of the landsturm, or, as nearly as possible, one for every *twenty-five souls*. This is the largest proportion that occurred in any state resting on its own resources during the war; for although Great Britain had 800,000 men in arms out of a population, not at that period, including Ireland, amounting to more than eighteen millions; yet of these only 500,000 were regular soldiers and sailors, the others being local militia, who were not permanently drawn from their occupations. One in a hundred in arms is the largest proportion which any country, how warlike soever, has ever been able to keep up for any length of time.—*Ante*, Chap. lxxvi. § 20; and LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech*, 17th Nov. 1813: *Parl. Deb.*

fanaticism ; yet I must admit that there are often strong appearances of retribution in human affairs." Had he lived to the present times, and witnessed the extraordinary confirmation of this truth which the revolutionary contest afforded, his innate candour would probably have extorted a still more unqualified testimony to Supreme superintendence from the great sceptic of the eighteenth century. On the 16th October 1793, at nine o'clock in the morning, Marie Antoinette ascended the fatal scaffold, and revolutionary crime reached its highest point by the murder of a queen and a woman, the noble and unoffending daughter of the Cæsars. On that day and that hour twenty years—on the 16th October 1813—the discharge of three guns from the Allied headquarters announced the commencement of the battle of Leipsic, and the infliction of the greatest punishment on a nation which the history of mankind had exhibited. On the 19th of October 1805, revolutionary ambition beheld its greatest external triumph consummated by the surrender of Mack, with thirty thousand men, to its victorious leader on the heights of Ulm ; and on that day eight years—on the 19th October 1813—the final blow was struck for Germany's deliverance by the swords of the Fatherland : thirty thousand prisoners lowered their colours to the victors within the walls of Leipsic ; and the mighty conqueror, sad and dejected, was leading back his broken and defeated host to the Rhine. On the 20th October 1805, Napoleon, as the brilliant array of Austrian captives defiled before him, said to those around him, "Gentlemen, this is all well ; but I must have greater things than these—I want ships, colonies, and commerce." On the *very next day* after these memorable words were spoken, on the 21st October 1805, the united navies of France and Spain were destroyed by the arm of Nelson ; the maritime war was finished by the thunderbolt of Trafalgar ; and "ships, colonies, and commerce" had irrevocably passed over to his enemies.

Whether these marvellous coincidences were the result of accident ; of that accumulation of great events in the years of the Revolution, which rendered almost every day prolific of historic incident : or formed part of the

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1813.

70.

Memorable example of moral retribution which the revolutionary war affords.

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LXXXII.

1813.

71.

Were the  
coincidences  
accidental or  
ordained.

general design of Providence for the more striking manifestation of its judgments upon the world, they are equally worthy of attention. Whatever may be thought of the coincidence of days, it was no accident which directed the march of events; it was no casual combination of chances which led revolutionary ambition to expiate its sins on the Saxon plains; which let fall in due season the sharpened edge of German retribution; and at the darkest period of the contest, sank the fleets of infidelity in the deep, and righted amidst the waves the destined ark of Christian civilisation.



## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

FORCING OF THE PYRENEES, AND INVASION OF FRANCE  
BY WELLINGTON.

NOTHING remained after the glorious termination of the battles in the Pyrenees, to complete the expulsion, on the western frontier, of the French from the Spanish territory, but the surrender of Pampeluna; and till that event took place the British general resolved to suspend active operations. But, meanwhile, success deserted the English standards, and unwonted disgrace was incurred in the east of the Peninsula; as if to demonstrate that victory was still the reward only of persevering and resolute conduct, and to mark, by the force of contrast, what they owed to the chief who had so long apparently chained it to his chariot wheels.

With a view to establish a good base for operations at the mouth of the Ebro, and at the same time hinder Suchet from despatching any succour to resist the general offensive movement which he was meditating in the north-west of the Peninsula, Wellington directed Sir John Murray, early in May, to embark the great bulk of his troops at Alicante, and attempt a descent near Tarragona; in the hope either of regaining that fortress, or, at all events, of drawing Suchet back for its defence from his advanced position on the Xucar, and withdrawing the beautiful and fertile province of Valencia from the imperial domination. To aid him in its reduction, a powerful battering train of fifty guns was placed at his disposal; and as Admiral Hallowell with a squadron of the Mediterranean fleet was at hand, both to facilitate the disembarkation and aid in the operations, it was

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1813.

1.  
Operations in  
the east of  
Spain.2.  
Expedition  
against  
Tarragona  
under Mur-  
ray and Hal-  
lowell.

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LXXXIII.

1813.

<sup>1</sup> Wellington's instructions to Murray, April 14, 1813. Gur. x. 297. State, 17th June 1813. Nap. vi. 704.

hoped they would prove successful, before an adequate French force could be collected from beyond the Ebro to raise the siege. The troops placed at Murray's disposal for this purpose were very considerable, consisting of the British and foreign divisions which had come from Sicily, Whittingham's and Roche's Spaniards, and the most efficient part of Elio's and the Duc del Parque's armies. But the first only were to be embarked for Catalonia; the latter being left to threaten the French positions covering Valencia on the Xucar. The forces embarked at Alicante were somewhat above fourteen thousand, of which eight thousand were British and German foot, and fifteen hundred British and German cavalry and artillery; the remainder being Spanish and Sicilian infantry.<sup>1</sup> \*

3.  
First operations against Tarragona, which are successful.

June 3.

This army embarked at Alicante on the 31st May, and arrived with a fair wind in the neighbourhood of Tarragona on the 3d June, where it was immediately landed by the active co-operation of Admiral Hallowell, the intrepid captain of the Swiftsure at the Nile.† They had thus entirely gained the start of Suchet, who could not possibly be up for a week to come, for he had a hundred and sixty miles to march; and meanwhile the besiegers, with the ample means at their disposal, might make themselves masters of Tarragona, the works of which were in a very dilapidated state, and which was defended by only sixteen hundred men. Fort Olivo, the scene of such desperate conflicts during the former siege,‡ was occupied, as well as the heights of Loretto, without resistance, the first day. An expedition was at the same time despatched under Colonel Prevost to attack San Felipe de Balaguer, a strong fort perched on a rock, which commanded and blocked up the only carriage road from Tortosa to Tarragona: and the fire of two mortars, which were with great difficulty brought up to bear on the fort, having blown up its magazine, the governor surrendered at discretion, with two hundred and sixty men. This early success greatly elevated the spirits of the Allied army, and they confidently anticipated the immediate capture of the main fortress;<sup>2</sup> for its out-works, incom-

<sup>2</sup> Nap. vi. 14, 15. Murray's Official Despatch, 9th June 1813. Gur. x. 482.

\* See Appendix, A, Chap. lxxxiii.

† Ante, Chap. xxvi. § 59.

‡ Ante, Chap. lxxv, §§ 73, 74.

plete, ill-flanked, without palisades or casemates, could not have withstood a vigorous attack, and once taken, a few hours' breaching with the noble battering train which they possessed, would have brought down the wall of the town, and a general assault might have been made with every prospect of success.

But the leader is the soul of an army, and no valour or skill on the part of the officers and men employed, can supply the want of resolute determination on the part of the general-in-chief. There is no reason to doubt the personal courage of Sir John Murray; but he proved himself destitute of the rarer qualities of firm resolution, moral courage, and confidence in his followers, which are indispensable in a commander. His troops were brave, and such was the spirit with which they were animated, that an Italian regiment which at Alicante had been ready to go over to the enemy, now volunteered to head the assault on Fort Royal. But the general was far from sharing the confidence of his followers; he had despaired of victory even in the moment of glorious triumph at Castalla, and he was not likely to be more sanguine when in front of the bastions of Tarragona. The operations were by no means pushed with the rapidity which circumstances required, and the ample means at his disposal rendered practicable. The guns, though close at hand, were not put into the batteries till the 11th, and though the order to assault the outworks was given that night, it was countermanded: instructions for embarking the guns were given, and, when half executed, likewise countermanded. Thus the precious time, when the place might have been carried, was lost in irresolution; and meanwhile intelligence of the approach of formidable bodies to raise the siege, completed the embarrassment of the English general. On the 11th, eight thousand French under Maurice Mathieu, began their march from Barcelona, and intelligence was received that Suchet was approaching the Col di Balaguer from Valencia with nine thousand more, driving before him Copons's mountain bands, who had drawn into the neighbourhood of Tarragona; Murray had twenty thousand men, whereof one-half were British and Germans, on whom reliance could be placed.<sup>1</sup> But instead of pushing the siege with this respect-

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1813.

June 6.

4.

Murray delays the assault, and is obliged to raise the siege.

June 11.

<sup>1</sup> Murray's Official Despatch, June 14, 1813. Gurw. x. 486. Nap. vi. 19, 21. Tor. v. 294, 295. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 259, 260.

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1813.

able force, which would have taken the place before either army could have got up, the English general gave orders for the embarkation of the troops and battering train. It began on the 12th, and was not completed till next day,\* when the French had not yet arrived even within sight of Tarragona. The soldiers and sailors could not conceal their indignation at abandoning the guns, nineteen in number, which were left in the advanced batteries—for they were part of the time-honoured train which had torn down the ramparts of Badajoz.\*

5. The army returns to Alicante, and Lord W. Bentinck assumes the command.

June 15.

After the troops had got on board, Murray disembarked part of them near Balaguer, in hope of cutting off a French brigade which lay there; but, finding it had escaped, he again put to sea, and steered for Alicante, while Copons retired with his Spaniards into the mountains, and the French entered Tarragona amidst the shouts of the garrison. Soon after Lord William Bentinck arrived from Sicily, and took the command. A violent storm, which overtook the fleet and wrecked some of the transports, prevented the soldiers being all disembarked before the 27th; and meanwhile, Elio and the Duc del Parque, with twenty-five thousand men, attacked, in two columns, Habert, who with nine thousand maintained the line of the Xucar; but they were defeated at both their points of attack with the loss each of some hundred men. Thus every thing seemed disastrous on the eastern coast; and, to complete the untoward state of affairs, Lord William Bentinck had come alone from Sicily, fearing a descent from Murat in that island; although, after having entered into secret negotiations with the Allies, he soon after set out for Saxony, where, as already mentioned, he bore an important part in the battle of Dresden.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tor. v. 296, 299. Suchet's Mém. ii. 324, 326. Nap. vi. 40, 41. Duc de Feltre to Suchet, May 18, 1813. Suchet, ii. 324.

But the triumphs of the French were not of long duration. On the 27th, intelligence was received of the battle of Vitoria, accompanied by orders, which were a necessary consequence of that event, for Suchet entirely

\* Murray after this disaster was deprived of the command, and, when he returned to England, was brought to a court-martial after the peace, which acquitted him of the serious charges preferred against him for his conduct on the occasion, but found him guilty of want of judgment. There was no harm in this; vindictive prosecutions are of no service in military affairs: it is the judgment of posterity which is the real reward or punishment of public conduct. Sir John was a man of talent, and had many estimable qualities in private: the fault lay in his appointment to a public situation for which he was wholly disqualified.

to evacuate Valencia, and retire behind the Ebro. He immediately made preparations for abandoning the province, and left Valencia with a heavy heart on the 5th July, which was entered four days afterwards by Lord William Bentinck. But, faithful to the positive instructions of Napoleon to keep a tenacious grasp of all his conquests, he left twelve hundred men in Saguntum, five hundred in Peniscola, and four thousand five hundred in Tortosa—a fatal error, the counterpart of the Emperor's obstinate retention of the fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder during the German campaign, and to which, more than to any other cause, the little subsequent success of Suchet in the field is to be ascribed. It was Suchet's first intention, when he retired behind the Ebro, to have marched upon Saragossa, and forming a respectable force with the troops left in that province, to have united with Clausel, and together threatened the right flank of Wellington. But the rapid retreat of Clausel from Saragossa, by Jaca, into France, totally disconcerted this well-conceived project. The plain of Aragon being entirely inundated with guerillas, while Wellington's masses in Navarre were on its flank, he felt it necessary to concentrate his forces in Catalonia and on the Lower Ebro, and, accordingly, gave orders for the evacuation of Saragossa and the fortresses of Aragon, the troops retiring to Mequinenza, Lerida, and Tortosa.<sup>1</sup>

Bentinck followed with the Anglo-Sicilian army; but it was soon found by the British general that, though his forces were of considerable numerical amount, yet they were not of such a composition as to enable him to hazard offensive operations without the utmost caution beyond the Ebro. He had, indeed, thirty thousand men nominally under his orders; but of these the British and Germans, not quite ten thousand strong, could alone be trusted in presence of the enemy. Elio and Roche, with ten thousand more, were at Valencia in a very destitute condition; the Duc del Parque, with twelve thousand, was several marches in the rear; and his troops, though paid by British subsidies, were, from the inherent vice of procrastination common to all the Spaniards, almost as unprovided as the former. Decaens, however, at this moment was himself in nearly as

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6.  
Retreat of  
Suchet be-  
hind the  
Ebro after  
the battle of  
Vitoria.  
July 3.  
July 9.

<sup>1</sup> Suchet, ii.  
324, 326.  
Nap. vi. 40.  
Tor. v. 296,  
298.

7.  
Bentinck fol-  
lows him to  
the Lower  
Ebro.

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difficult a situation ; for the news of the battle of Vitoria had again roused all the upper valleys of Catalonia, and the insurrection, nourished by supplies from the English fleet off Palermo, was making rapid progress. Thus neither party were in a condition to undertake any operation of importance ; and though Suchet had sixty-eight thousand of the best troops of the empire at his command, they were so scattered over the numerous fortified posts and cities which the Emperor had ordered him to garrison and maintain, that he was little more than a match in the field for Bentinck with his motley array of thirty thousand.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Suchet, ii.  
328, 334.  
Nap. vi. 44,  
49. Vict. et  
Cong. xxii.  
262, 263.

8.  
Extraordi-  
nary magni-  
tude of the  
French con-  
tributions  
in Valencia,  
which are  
brought to  
light by this  
retreat.

The evacuation of Aragon and Valencia, like that of all the other places which had been under the dominion of the French armies, revealed the extraordinary system of forced contributions and organised plunder, by which they had so long succeeded in maintaining their ascendancy in Europe without any sensible addition to the burdens of France itself. Immediately after the occupation of Valencia in the end of 1811, the French marshal, as already mentioned, had imposed an extraordinary contribution of 200,000,000 reals, or about £2,000,000 sterling, a burden equal, if the value of money be taken into consideration, to at least £5,000,000 in Great Britain. The half of this enormous requisition entirely exhausted the whole money, gold, silver plate, and jewels of the province, and the remainder was taken in grain, stuffs, clothing, and other articles necessary for the subsistence of the troops. Next year the burden was fixed at 70,000,000 reals, or £700,000, equal in like manner to £1,750,000 in England ; but by the vigour of the French marshal's government, and the regularity and justice of his rule in the distribution and exaction of these enormous burdens, nearly the whole was brought, chiefly in kind, into the imperial treasury.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Suchet, ii.  
290, 296.  
Tor. v. 304,  
305.

9.  
And in  
Aragon.

Aragon at first, after the capture of its capital, had been subjected to enormous burdens, great part of which was irrecoverable from their excessive magnitude ; but from the time that the regular government of Suchet began, the impositions were more uniform, and amounted to about four times what the province had paid in the most flourishing days of the old monarchy. While these

facts illustrate in the clearest manner the oppressive nature of the imperial government, and explain the unbounded exasperation which it every where excited in Europe, as well as the long enthusiasm which it awakened in France itself, it must at the same time be added, to the honour of Marshal Suchet, that he carried this onerous system into execution with far more attention to the interests and wishes of the inhabitants than any of the other French marshals. No private plunder disgraced his footsteps, or military disorders rendered hateful his government. Unlike the other parts of Spain, the monuments of the fine arts remained untouched in Valencia during his administration; and, despite the grievous weight of the burdens he was obliged to impose, such was the protection to industry which he simultaneously afforded, that the receding of the footsteps of the French army was beheld with regret by the grateful inhabitants.<sup>1</sup>

Bentinck long hesitated whether he should commence active operations in Catalonia with the siege of Tortosa or Tarragona; but he at length determined for the latter, chiefly in consequence of the facilities for carrying it on which the vicinity of the sea and the Mediterranean squadron afforded. Having crossed the Ebro, accordingly, he sat down before the place in the end of July with ten thousand good troops; while the Spanish armies, about twenty thousand more, but of very indifferent quality, were drawn to the neighbourhood to cover the siege. Suchet was long unable to collect any sufficient force to interrupt his operations; but having at length formed a junction with Decaens, he advanced at the head of thirty thousand men to raise the siege. Bentinck was at the head of an equal force, but upon the Spaniards no reliance could be placed; and he therefore wisely declined battle, retreating to the defiles of the Hospitalat, near the Col di Balaguer. Suchet, without pursuing him, passed on to Tarragona, which he entered on the 18th, and immediately blew up the fortifications and brought away the garrison. Such was the strength of the ancient masonry, the work of the Romans, that it was with no small time and labour that the demolition was effected.<sup>2</sup> Having destroyed these renowned bastions, the French general retired to the

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<sup>1</sup> Suchet, ii.  
290, 298, and  
i. 279, 314.  
Tor. v. 304,  
306.

10.  
Bentinck  
besieges  
Tarragona,  
and is com-  
pelled to  
raise the  
siege.

Aug. 15.

Aug. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Nap. vi. 50,  
54. Tor. v.  
328, 331.  
Suchet, ii.  
334, 338.

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neighbourhood of Villa Franca and the Llobregat, while Decaens was sent into Upper Catalonia; and Tarragona, with its ruined battlements and fertile fields, was occupied by the British forces.

11.

Unfortunate  
combat at the  
pass of Ordal.

Gradually after this the British army gained ground, and the French were cooped up into more contracted limits within the war-wasted province of Catalonia. On the 5th September, the advance entered Villa Franca, and Suchet retired altogether into the Llobregat, leaving Tortosa, Lerida, and Mequinenza, now blockaded by the Spanish troops, to their own resources. An event, however, ere long occurred, which showed that it was not without reason that Bentinck, with his heterogeneous array of troops, had hitherto avoided a general engagement with the admirable veterans of Suchet. On the 12th September, twelve hundred German and British infantry, with two British and two Spanish guns, under Colonel Adam, and three battalions of Sarsfield's Catalonians, occupied, twelve miles in advance of Villa Franca, the position of Ordal, a ridge which rises gradually from a deep and impassable ravine, crossed by a noble ridge in front. Suchet, hearing that this advanced guard, not more in all than three thousand men, was not adequately supported, conceived the design of cutting it off. For this purpose the divisions Harispe and Habert were put in motion at nightfall, by bright moonlight passed the bridge without resistance, and at midnight suddenly attacked the Allied advanced guard at all points. The second battalion of the 27th, who were on the right, were first assaulted; but the men, who were lying beside their muskets in battle array, instantly started up and fought fiercely; and the Spaniards, who were next attacked in the centre, made a most gallant resistance. Harispe's men, however, crossing the bridge in great numbers, ere long turned the Allied flank; Adam was wounded early; Colonel Reeves, who was second in command, was also soon struck down; and amidst the confusion of a nocturnal combat, the troops, without any recognised leader, fought with great fury in detached bodies, but without any general plan. At length the Spaniards in the centre were broken, the 27th regiment turned and forced, and the whole dispersed, four guns being taken.<sup>1</sup> Captain

<sup>1</sup> Bentinck's  
Official  
Account.  
Gurw. xi.  
147, 148.  
Suchet, ii.  
341, 343.  
Nap. vi. 57,  
59. Tor. v.  
331, 332.



Waldron, with eighty of the 27th, and Captain Muller, with the like number of Germans, effected their retreat by the hills ; but all the rest were dispersed or slain, and the actual loss was not less than a thousand men.

Encouraged by this blow, which seems to have been induced by undue confidence on the part of both Bentinck and Adam, in thus exposing an advanced guard without support to the blows of superior bodies of the enemy, Suchet pursued his march, and came up at eight o'clock with the main Allied army near Villa Franca. But they retreated in admirable order, and a charge of the French cavalry was stopped with remarkable resolution by Lord Frederick Bentinck, at the head of the 28th dragoons and German horse, who engaged in single combat and wounded Colonel Myers of the French horse, and defeated them with the loss of three hundred men. Great numbers of the missing at the pass of Ordal, who had been supposed to be taken, rejoined their colours two days afterwards ; but this disaster had the effect of causing the Allied army to retire to the neighbourhood of Tarragona, while the Catalonians fell back to Igualada. Although the operations in the east of Spain were thus checkered with misfortune, yet they had a most important effect on the issue of the campaign, and clearly demonstrated on what erroneous principles Napoleon's defensive system of retaining garrisons in so many fortresses was founded. For during a period when Soult was pressed by superior forces in the western Pyrenees, and France itself was menaced with invasion, sixty-eight thousand of the best soldiers of the French empire were kept in check by ten thousand British and German troops, supported by twice that number of ill-disciplined Spaniards ; all pressure on Wellington's right flank from that formidable body was prevented, and the whole of Valencia and half of Catalonia were rescued from their grasp by a motley array, which could not for three days have kept the field in presence of Suchet's united forces.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile Wellington, having completed his preparations, and received considerable reinforcements both from England and the hospitals, from whence the wounded men were discharged in such extraordinary numbers, and with such rapidity, under the influence of the mental

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12.  
The Allies  
retire to  
Tarragona.  
Sept. 13.

<sup>1</sup> Suchet, ii.  
342, 345.  
Bentinck's  
Official  
Account,  
Sept. 15,  
1813. Gurw.  
xi. 147, 148.  
Nap. vii. 57,  
59. Tor. v.  
342, 333.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
306, 310.

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13.

Reasons  
which at this  
period  
induced Wel-  
lington to  
desire not to  
invade  
France.

<sup>1</sup> Gurw. xi.  
56, 57, and  
172, 200.  
Wellington  
to Spanish  
Minister at  
War, Aug.  
30, 1813.

excitement produced by continued and glorious success,\* as to excite the astonishment of the whole army, was taking measures for an invasion of France. He was desirous, indeed, not to hazard that attempt at the present moment, for several reasons:—Pampeluna, though again closely blockaded, and now severely distressed for provisions, had not yet fallen; and till that event took place, not only could the blockading forces not be reckoned on to support the Allied army in its advance, but he himself could not be considered as solidly established on the Spanish frontier. The Spanish troops who were acting in co-operation with his army, were fully forty thousand, and they had now acquired, from acting with the Anglo-Portuguese forces, a far higher degree of consistence and efficiency than they had ever before attained during the war; but still there were many circumstances in their condition which rendered them likely to prove at least as dangerous as serviceable to an invading army.<sup>1</sup>

14.

Total inefficiency of the government at Cadiz was the principal one.

In spite of all the representations of Wellington, which had been as energetic as they were innumerable, the government at Cadiz, wholly engrossed with democratic ambition, had taken no efficient steps to provide for their armies. They were neither clothed nor paid, and in great part depended for their subsistence upon the British rations; and there was too good reason to fear, that if they entered France they would rouse a national resistance, by the license with which they might retaliate upon its inhabitants the misery which their own countrymen had so long suffered at the hands of the enemy. The Cortes, inflamed almost to madness by the incessant efforts of the republican press at Cadiz, who now dreaded nothing so much as the success of the Allied arms, did all in their power to thwart the designs of Wellington for the common cause. The excesses at San Sebastian afforded too plausible a ground, which was amply taken advantage of, for

\* "We have gained on the strength of the 76th, 84th, and 85th regiments, 1797 rank and file, and 800 recruits; and 500 British and 1500 Portuguese from the hospitals last week, and we are gaining some every day. We are now as strong as we were on the 25th July, before the battles of the Pyrenees, and in a short time we shall be within 5000 or 6000 as strong as we were before the battle of Vittoria. The troops are uncommonly healthy, indeed there is no sickness amongst them."—WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, 25th August 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 45.

inflaming the popular passions against the English general; they were represented as not the designless work of the unbridled soldiers, but as the deliberate attempt of a heretical nation to destroy a mercantile community, of which they were jealous. Wellington himself was openly accused of aspiring to the crown of Spain: his character was too great, his achievements had been too glorious, not to excite the most vehement envy among all the base of the realm he had delivered.\* To such a height did these malignant recriminations rise, that he more than once offered to resign the supreme command; and, despairing of success with such lukewarm or treacherous Allies, advised the British government to demand San Sebastian as a hostage, and, if refused, to withdraw their forces altogether from the Peninsula.<sup>1†</sup>

Although the British government were far from being insensible to the cogency of these arguments, yet they wisely determined to follow Wellington's advice, in cautiously abstaining from all interference with the Regency

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<sup>1</sup> Wellington to the Spanish Minister at War, Aug. 30, 1813. Gurw. xi. 56, 57, to Lord Bathurst, Sept. 5. 1813. Ibid. xi. 90, 91; and xi. 172, 200; xi. 327, 349.

\* "Nec minus periculi, ex magna fama, quam ex mala."—TACITUS. Envy is a passion second only in extent to selfishness, to which it is twin brother in human nature, and its effects are far more general than is commonly supposed.

† "More than half of Spain has been cleared of the enemy above a year; and the whole of Spain, excepting Catalonia and a small part of Aragon, since the months of May and June last. The most abundant harvest has been reaped in all parts of the country; millions of money, spent by contending armies in the Peninsula, are circulating every where; and yet your armies, however weak in numbers, are literally starving. The Allied British and Portuguese army under my command, have been subsisted—particularly latterly—almost exclusively upon the magazines imported by sea; and I am concerned to inform your Excellency, that besides money for the pay of all the armies, which has been given from the military chest of the British army, and has been received from no other quarter, the British magazines have supplied quantities of provisions to all the Spanish armies, in order to enable them to remain in the field at all; and, notwithstanding this assistance, I have had the mortification of seeing the Spanish troops on the outposts obliged to plunder the nut and apple trees for subsistence; and to know that the Spanish troops, employed in the blockade of Pampeluna and Santona, were starving upon half an allowance of bread, while the enemy whom they were blockading were, at the same time, receiving their full allowance.

"It cannot be pretended that the country does not produce the means of maintaining the number of men necessary for its defence; those means are undoubtedly superabundant; and the enemy has proved that armies can be maintained in Spain, at the expense of the Spanish nation, infinitely longer than are necessary for its defence.

"Sir, the fact is notorious, that there is no authority in the country to enforce the law and the due payment of the contributions to government; and the officers of the Hacienda do not perform their duty.

"They are infinitely more numerous than is necessary, and their maintenance exhausts the revenues which ought to be employed in the maintenance of the troops on the frontiers. I have sent to your Excellency's office proofs that some branches of the revenue cost 70 and 80 per cent to collect them.

"It must be obvious to your Excellency that matters cannot go on long as they are. The winter is approaching, and no magazines, or other provision of

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15.

By desire of  
the British  
government  
he undertakes  
it.

1 Nap. vi.  
239, 246.  
Wellington  
to Lord  
Bathurst,  
Gurw. xi.  
132, 176.

and Cortes at Cadiz, how criminal or absurd soever their conduct might be, and to bend all their efforts to the vigorous prosecution of the war. But they were induced, by other considerations of still higher importance, to urge their general to undertake the immediate invasion of the south of France. The coalition in Germany, they were well aware, was still very nearly matched by Napoleon; the disasters at Dresden had well-nigh dissolved its heterogeneous materials; and therefore so important an event as the invasion of France by the British forces, might be expected to produce a moral effect of the greatest importance throughout Europe. Wellington, who at that period had little confidence in the stability of the Grand Alliance, and looked, not without reason, to the security of the Peninsula as the main object of his efforts, was desirous that his troops, or a principal part of them, should be turned against Suchet in Catalonia, in order that, during the absence of Napoleon with the greater part of his forces in Germany, the important strongholds in that province, an effectual barrier against France in the east, might be recovered to the Spanish monarchy.<sup>1</sup>

any kind, have been made for the Spanish troops, who, as I have above stated, have not at present even enough for their daily subsistence."—WELLINGTON to the Spanish Minister at War, 30th August 1813; GURWOOD, vol. xi. pp. 56, 58.

"Our character is involved in a greater degree than we are aware of in the democratical transactions of the Cortes, in the opinion of all moderate and well-thinking Spaniards, and, I am afraid, with the rest of Europe; and if the mob of Cadiz begin to move heads from shoulders, as the newspapers have threatened Castanos, and the assembly seize upon landed property to supply their necessities, I am afraid we must do something more than discountenance them.

"It is quite impossible that such a system can last. What I regret is, that I am the person that maintains it. If I was out of the way, there are plenty of generals who would overturn it. Ballasteros positively intended it; and I am much mistaken if O'Donnell, and even Castanos, and probably others, are not equally ready. If the King should return, he also will overturn the whole fabric, if he has any spirit; but things have gone so far, and the gentlemen of Cadiz are so completely masters of their trade of managing that assembly, that I am afraid there must be another convulsion; and I earnestly recommend to the British government to keep themselves clear of the democracy, and to interfere in nothing while the government is in their hands, excepting in carrying on the war, and keeping out the foreign enemy."—WELLINGTON to EARL BATHURST, 5th Sept. 1813; GURWOOD, vol. xi. pp. 90, 91.

"In consequence of the existing regency of Spain having departed from all the engagements entered into with me by the late regency after repeated personal discussions, and notwithstanding that I had received what I conceived was a confirmation of the engagements, and a declaration to adhere to them by the existing regency, I thought it proper, on the 30th August last, to resign the command of the Spanish armies, which resignation I have been informed by a despatch from the Minister at War of the 22d of September, has been accepted by the regency, and I continue to exercise the command only till the new Cortes shall have been assembled."—WELLINGTON to EARL BATHURST, 5th October 1813; GURWOOD, vol. xi. p. 164.

But the English government, having in view the general interests of Europe, and the probable effect of the measure on the determination of the Allied Sovereigns on the Elbe, decided otherwise. The invasion of France, even before Pampeluna had fallen, was resolved on, and Wellington, like a good soldier, set himself to execute, to the best of his ability, an offensive campaign, which on military principles he deemed premature.

Soult's position on the northern side of the Bidassoa consisted of the base of a triangle, of which Bayonne was the apex, and the great roads running from thence to Irun on the sea-coast, and St Jean Pied-de-Port in the interior, were the sides. The interior of this triangle was filled with a mass of rugged and in great part inaccessible mountains, affording little means of subsistence to troops, and presenting at every step huge cliffs and passes capable of arresting an invading army. The French army was stationed on the summit of the last ridge of this wild and rocky district, which immediately overlooks the valley of the Bidassoa, and various parts of it were strengthened with field-works; while the summit of the Rhune mountain,—the highest part of the ridge, terminating in a peak, surrounded on three sides by inaccessible precipices, and to be reached only from the eastward by a long narrow shelve on the top of the rocks,—was crowned with a complete redoubt. All the hill roads which penetrated through this strong position were commanded by works, the greater part of which were nearly completed; and the position, flanked by the sea on the one side, and by the Rhune mountain, which rises to the height of two thousand eight hundred feet, and overlooks all the neighbouring hills, on the other, could hardly be turned on either side.<sup>1</sup>

Wellington, nevertheless, determined to hazard an attack, and he first intended to have made it in the middle of September, immediately after the castle of San Sebastian fell; but the excessive storms of rain which afterwards came on, and swelled the Bidassoa into a raging torrent, rendered it impossible to attempt the crossing of the fords till the beginning of October; and the state of the tides, upon which the threading through them was mainly dependent, would not permit the passage being

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16.

Description  
of the French  
position on  
the Bidassoa.

<sup>1</sup> Nap. vi.  
246, 247.  
Belm. i. 266.  
Gurw. xi.  
176.

17.

Amount of  
the force  
which Soult  
had in this  
position.

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attempted till the 7th of that month. Soult, not expecting that Wellington would attempt to force his strong position in this quarter, had not above fifteen thousand men immediately above the Bidassoa; as in truth he did not regard the heights in front as the principal part of his position, but it was in the fortifications on the Nive in their rear that the principal line of defence was constructed, by which he hoped to prevent the invasion of the south of France. The French general had recently been joined by sixteen thousand new conscripts, who were distributed among the veteran corps of the army, so that his numerical force was little inferior to what it had been before the battle of the Pyrenees. But this accession of force was fully counterbalanced on the Allied side by the arrival of three thousand fresh troops from England; and the approach of the Andalusian army of reserve under the Conde D'Abisbal, fully twelve thousand strong, which bore an important part in the action that followed.<sup>1</sup>

The troops which Wellington employed in the attack were very considerable, and proportioned rather to the strength of the enemy's position, than to the actual force he had at his command to defend it. Graham, having with him the first and fifth divisions, Lord Aylmer's brigade, and a brigade of Portuguese, commanded the left wing, and received orders to cross the Bidassoa by the fords immediately above and below the site where the bridge on the great road from Paris to Madrid formerly stood; Major-General Alten with the light division, and Longa and Giron's Spaniards, was to cross the upper fords, and attack the Bayonette mountain and the pass of Vera; while on the right the army of reserve of Andalusia, under the command of General Giron, was to attack the enemy's posts on the mountain of La Rhune, while the fourth and sixth divisions were in reserve to support him, if necessary. Altogether, the English general directed twenty-four thousand men against the Lower Bidassoa, and twenty thousand against the Rhune mountain and its adjacent ridges.<sup>2\*</sup>

The night preceding the attack was unusually stormy and tempestuous. A thunder-storm rolled down from

<sup>1</sup> Belm. i. 266, 267. Soult to the Minister at War at Paris, Oct. 26, 1813. Ibid. 692, 694. Nap. vi. 246, 252. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 9, 1813. Gurw. xi. 176.

18. Wellington's dispositions for forcing the passage.

<sup>2</sup> Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 9, 1813. Gurw. xi. 176. Murray's general orders in Wyld's Memoirs, 129, 130, 133.

\* See Appendix, B, Chap. lxxxiii.

the summit of the Rhune mountain, and broke with the utmost violence on the French positions on the Lower Bidassoa. During the darkness and storm, Wellington advanced a number of his guns up to the heights of San Marcial, while the troops and pontoons were brought down, still unperceived, close to Irun, at the mouth of the Bidassoa. At the same time the troops who were to cross over farther up, moved close to the respective points of passage, which were no less than ten in number, in order to be able simultaneously to commence the attack on the French position. All the tents of the Allied army on the hills were left standing, and the pontoons, which had been brought down to the water's edge, were carefully concealed from the enemy's view. At seven o'clock Lord Aylmer's brigade, which led the advance on the right extremity of the left wing, suddenly emerged from behind their screen of hills, and advanced with a rapid pace towards the sands adjoining Irun, and immediately all the guns on the heights of San Marcial commenced their fire along the whole line. So completely were the enemy taken by surprise, that Marshal Soult was passing troops in review in the centre of his position, at the moment when the first guns were heard at the Lower Bidassoa.

He immediately set out at the gallop in that direction ; but before he could arrive in its vicinity, the positions had been carried, and the British were solidly established in the French territory. From the summit of San Marcial seven columns could be seen descending rapidly from the heights, and advancing with beautiful precision and a rapid step towards the fords of the Bidassoa. Those on the upper parts of the stream descended at once into the enemy's fire ; but those on the lower wound like huge snakes through the level sands, and were in some places almost immersed in water before they reached the firm ground on the opposite side. But the surprise was complete, and the enemy on the heights opposite made no very strenuous resistance. Several redoubts on the sand-hills were taken, and seven pieces of cannon captured. A much more obstinate resistance was made, however, at the mountain of Louis the Fourteenth, and the heights of the Croix des Bouquets, which was the key to the whole position in that quarter,<sup>2</sup> and towards which

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19.  
Commence-  
ment of the  
attack.  
Oct. 8.1 Gurw. xi.  
177. Nap.  
vi. 254.  
Pellet, 54,  
57.20.  
Forcing of  
the French  
lines.2 Wellington  
to Lord  
Bathurst,  
Oct. 9, 1813.  
Gurw. xi.  
177. Nap.  
vi. 254, 258.  
Subaltern,  
94, 104.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
283. Pellet,  
57, 58.

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both parties brought up their troops and guns with the greatest rapidity. The Germans, who first made the attack on this point, were repulsed with severe loss ; but the 9th regiment, under Colonel Cameron, at this moment came up, and stormed the post with the utmost gallantry ; the French falling back at all points, and in great confusion, on the high-road towards Bayonne ; and it was only by the arrival of Soult at this moment, with the reserve and several guns, that order was in part restored.

21.  
The French  
are driven  
from their  
position on  
the left.

While this rapid and important success was achieved on the left, Alten, with the light division, having forded the river, attacked the enemy's intrenchments in the Pass of Vera ; and Giron, with the Andalusians, was led against the mountain of La Rhune. Taupin's division guarded the stupendous rocks in front of the Allies which were to be assailed ; while the sixth division, under Cole, which was posted on the heights of St Barbara, formed an imposing reserve, full in view of the French troops, and ready to co-operate at a moment's warning in the attack. The French soldiers in this quarter were posted on the summit of enormous rocky ridges, one of which, called by the soldiers the Boar's Back, projected like a huge redoubt far into the valley of Beira. No sooner, however, did Clausel, who commanded there, hear the first cannon-shots on the Lower Bidassoa, than he hurried four regiments up to the summit of the Great Rhune, and advanced with the remainder of his forces to the support of Taupin on the ridges beneath. But before he could arrive, the action in that quarter was decided. Soon after seven o'clock, the Boar's Back was assailed at both ends ; at its western extremity, that is, on the British right, by Giron's Andalusians, and on its left, towards the British centre, by Colonel Colborne, at the head of the 43d, the 95th, and 52d, and a Portuguese brigade of light troops. Ere long the slopes of the mountains were covered with men and fire, while the dark forests at the bottom of the ravines were filled with volumes of white smoke, that came curling up out of their inmost recesses.<sup>1</sup>

The Portuguese Caçadores were the first who made the attack ; but they were overmatched by the French, who, rushing out of the redoubt at the summit, hurled them over the rocky slopes with great violence. In the middle,

<sup>1</sup> Gurw. xi.  
177, 179.  
Nap. vi. 264,  
266. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
283, 284.



however, of their pursuit, the 52d regiment suddenly emerged from the wood, and startled the victorious French by the apparition of the red uniforms. At this sight the pursuers wavered and fled, closely followed by the British regiment, who entered the redoubt with them. Following up his success, Colborne next attacked the second intrenchment, which was carried with equal impetuosity, and four hundred prisoners were taken. Meanwhile Giron's Spaniards, on the right, had also worked their way with great difficulty up the eastern end of the Boar's Back, and stormed some intrenchments which the enemy had thrown up in that quarter. They were repulsed, however, in the attack of the strong position of the Hermitage, from the summit of which the enemy rolled down immense rocks, which made huge gaps in the assailing companies. On this rugged height the French succeeded in maintaining themselves all night ; but as soon as the mist had cleared away on the following morning, Wellington directed an attack by Giron's Spaniards by the eastern ridge, which alone was accessible. This important and difficult operation was performed with the utmost gallantry by the Andalusians, who drove the enemy from one fortified post in the rugged slopes to another, till the Great Rhune itself was in a manner environed by enemies. Clausel upon this, fearful of being cut off, drew off his regiments from that elevated position in the night ; and on the following morning the whole ridge occupied by the enemy, from the summit of La Rhune to the sea-coast, was in the hands of the Allies.<sup>1</sup>

Though not so celebrated as some of his other achievements, there is none which reflects more lustre on Wellington as a general than this extraordinary action. With assiduous care, the French had for more than a month fortified their mountain position in the Pyrenees ; it was guarded by an army as numerous, so far as the regular troops on either side were concerned, as that of the British general ; and the heights on which the French were placed, far exceeded the far-famed steeps of Torres Vedras in strength and ruggedness. From this all but impregnable position they had been driven, in a single day, by an enemy, who, to reach it, had to ford a difficult and dangerous river, forming, as it were, a vast wet ditch to

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22.

The Boar's  
Back and  
Great Rhune  
are carried.

<sup>1</sup> Wellington  
to Lord  
Bathurst,  
Oct 9, 1813.  
Gurw. xi.  
177, 178.  
Nap. vi. 264,  
267. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii;  
283, 284.  
Pellot, 60,  
61. Tor. v.  
364, 366.

23.

Reflections  
on this battle.

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the intrenchment. Great as was the spirit evinced by the whole troops, Spanish as well as British or Portuguese, who had been engaged, it was not by their efforts alone that the battle was won. It was the combinations of the general which rendered their attacks irresistible. It was the secrecy of his preparations, and the suddenness of his onset, which carried the enemy's position on the Lower Bidassoa. It was the admirable combinations which threw an overwhelming force against the rocks in the centre, which won the dizzy heights of La Rhune. In defence of their rocky intrenchments, the French were far from displaying their wonted spirit and vigour; and, what is very remarkable, the same troops who had ascended with so intrepid a step the crags of Soraoren, now abandoned with little resistance the loftier rocks of the Bayonette—a remarkable proof of the old observation, that the soldiers of that nation are much better adapted for offensive than defensive warfare, and an illustration of how much the courage of the bravest troops may be lowered by a long series of defeats. In this battle the Allies lost about sixteen hundred men, of whom one-half were Spaniards. The French were weakened by not more than fourteen hundred, their troops during the greater part of the fighting being protected by the intrenchments which they defended. But this was of little consequence. The enemy's intrenched position, upon which they had so long laboured, had been lost; the territory of the Great Nation was violated; and a vast hostile army, for the first time since the Revolution, was permanently encamped within the territory of France. And thus was England, which throughout the contest had been the most persevering and resolute of all the opponents of the Revolution, and whose government had never yet either yielded to the victories or acknowledged the chiefs which it had placed at the head of affairs, the first of all the powers of Europe which succeeded in planting its victorious standards on the soil of France.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nap. vi.  
268, 269.  
Wellington  
to Lord  
Bathurst, 9th  
Oct. 1813.  
Gurw. xi.  
179.

The first care of Wellington, after the army was established within the French territory, was to use the most vigorous measures to prevent plundering on the part of his troops, and to establish that admirable system of paying regularly for the supplies of the army, which, as much

as the bravery of the British soldiers, had contributed to his previous successes. The better to effect these objects, he issued a noble proclamation to his men, in which, after recounting the incalculable miseries which the exactions of the French soldiers had brought upon Spain and Portugal, he declared that it would be unworthy of a great nation to retaliate these miseries upon the innocent inhabitants of France, and therefore that plundering and every species of excess would be rigorously punished, and supplies of every kind paid for with the same regularity as they had been in the Peninsular kingdoms.\* Neither the Spanish troops nor the French peasantry at first gave any credit to this proclamation, so utterly at variance was it with the system by which the former had been accustomed to suffer, and the latter to profit, during the Peninsular campaigns. But Wellington was at once serious in his intention and resolute in his determination; and he soon gave convincing proof of both by instantly hanging several soldiers, both British and Spanish, who were detected in the act of pillaging. At the same time, the perfect regularity with which supplies of all kinds were paid for with ready money in the English camp, awakened the covetous feelings of the French mountaineers, who hastened to profit by the prolific stream of war, which, fortunately for them, had entered their valleys. Simultaneously with this, fourteen French peasants, who had been taken near the pass of Echalar firing on the British troops, were conducted to Passages as prisoners of war, where they were embarked for the

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24.

Wellington's  
noble and  
humane con-  
duct on  
entering  
France.

\* "The officers and soldiers of the army must recollect that their nations are at war with France, solely because the ruler of the French nation will not allow them to be at peace, and is desirous of forcing them to submit to his yoke; and they must not forget that the worst of evils suffered by the enemy, in his profligate invasion of Spain and Portugal, have been occasioned by the irregularities of the soldiers, and their cruelties, authorised and encouraged by their chiefs, towards the unfortunate and peaceful inhabitants of the country.

"To revenge this conduct on the peaceful inhabitants of France would be unmanly, and unworthy of the nations to whom the commander of the forces now addresses himself; and, at all events, would be the occasion of similar and worse evils to the army at large, than those which the enemy's army have suffered in the Peninsula, and would eventually prove highly injurious to the public interests.

"The rules, therefore, which have been observed hitherto in requiring, and taking, and giving receipts for supplies from the country, are to be continued in the villages on the French frontier; and the commissioners attached to each of the armies of the several nations will receive the orders from the commander-in-chief of the army of their nations respecting the mode and period of paying for such supplies."—WELLINGTON'S *Proclamation*, 8th October 1813; GURWOOD, xi. p. 1

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British islands. The effect of this stroke was incalculable, for the peasants could not deny its justice, or accuse the British general of harshness when treating them as prisoners of war; while at the same time the idea of being carried to England, appeared like an exile to the world's end to these simple mountaineers. Thus, impelled by terror on the one hand, and attracted by love of gain on the other, the peasantry generally laid aside all feelings of hostility, and the English dollars succeeded in revealing stores of subsistence in the mountains, which all the rigour of the French requisitions had been unable to discover.<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pellot, 80.  
Tor. v. 366.  
Nap. vi. 268.  
Gurw. xi.  
169.

25.  
Contrast pre-  
sented by the  
French re-  
quisitions.

What rendered the impression of this conduct the greater upon the French peasantry, was the wide contrast which the measures of their enemies thus presented to the system which was at the same time pursued by their own defenders in the French army. The revolutionary generals, now for the first time thrown back upon the territory of France, had no means, which the government of Paris would sanction, of providing for the subsistence, clothing, and often pay of the troops, but by forced requisitions on the countries in which they were cantoned. This system did admirably well, and was in the highest degree popular with the French, so long as the requisitions fell on foreign countries; but the case was very different now when they were driven back into their own territory, and these oppressive burdens had to be borne by themselves. Their eyes were then at once opened with appalling effect to the injustice which they so long practised upon others. When the whole arrondissements round Bayonne, accordingly, were laid under contribution for the support of Soult's army, and these demands were necessarily repeated as the wants of the troops called for fresh supplies, their indignation knew no bounds; and such

\* "The system which the Allies adopted on entering France, was eminently calculated to render the inhabitants favourable to their operations; money, the sinews of war, was as abundant with them as it was wanting with us: they scattered it abroad with profusion, and took nothing without paying for it with hard cash on the spot. The English knew well that that affected generosity would do us more mischief than their arms; and, in point of fact, they thus obtained resources which we had been incapable of discovering. The peasants who could not reason were rapidly seduced by that politic conduct, and received as friends the army of the stranger whose footsteps sullied the soil of their country, and whose arms were stained with the blood of their brethren."—PELLOT, *Mémoires de la Guerre des Pyrénées*, p. 80.

was the general exasperation, that already they were contrasting these enormous revolutionary burdens with the comparatively light weight of the old *corvées*, which had been so much complained of before the Revolution. Soult, indeed, did his utmost to prevent plundering, and even executed an officer and some soldiers who had been detected pillaging a few houses in Sarre, immediately after the action. But this was not the evil that was complained of. It was the forced requisitions; in other words, the organised rapine of government, that was the real evil which was so sorely felt. And thus, while the English army spread wealth and prosperity around its cantonments, the presence of the French was known only by the oppressive weight of the military exactions by which they were maintained; and such was the magnitude of these burdens, and the exasperation which they excited among the peasantry of the country, that Soult's principal commissary, Pellot, has not hesitated to ascribe chiefly to that cause the general indisposition manifested by the rural population of France, during the invasion of 1814, to support the cause of Napoleon.<sup>1\*</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pellot, 39,  
42, 79.

When Wellington found himself once established in the territory of France, he immediately began strengthening his position with field-works, facing towards the north, in order to be the better able to resist any attempts Soult might make to expel him from the French soil. He waited only the surrender of Pampeluna to resume offensive operations; but such had been the activity which the governor had displayed in replenishing his magazines during the short interruption of the blockade by the battle of Soraoren, that it was not till two additional months had expired that his resources were exhausted. The garrison had confidently expected to be delivered on the 25th of July, and gazed with silent rapture on the mountains of Zubiri and Esteribar, which reflected at

26.  
Distress of  
Pampeluna.

\* "The system of forced requisitions conceals, under the appearance of a just division of the burdens of war, an inexhaustible source of abuses. It weighs exclusively on the rural proprietors, while the capitalist, who has no productions, escapes it altogether. This system, born of the Revolution, applicable, perhaps, under a popular government, exasperates the mind under the rule of a single monarch. I do not hesitate to say that it is one of the causes which has chiefly contributed to render the departments subjected to requisitions so impatient of the government of Napoleon; the people were incessantly pronouncing with loud groans the words requisition and *corvée*."—PELLOT, *Commissaire-Général de la Guerre dans les Pyrénées en 1813*, p. 39.

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night the glow of the French bivouacs ; but these hopes gradually died away as the fire receded on the day following, and their aching eyes beheld no friendly columns surmounting the nearest ridges of the Pyrenees. On the 30th the blockading forces resumed their old position, and the blockade became more strict than ever. Early in August, the Galicians, about nine thousand strong, replaced O'Donnell's Andalusians in the surrounding lines ; while Mina, with ten thousand more, lay in the defiles of the Pyrenees to intercept the garrison, in case they should escape the vigilance of the troops around the town. With such strictness, however, was the blockade conducted, that during the three months it lasted the garrison never once received even a letter from their comrades.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jones' Sieges, ii. 5, 9. Belm. iv. 776, 779. Nap. vi. 230.

27.  
Its capitulation.  
Oct. 15.

In the middle of October, the governor, who had conducted the defence with the most persevering constancy, put his troops on scanty rations of horse-flesh ; and on the 26th, his resources being wholly exhausted, and the garrison subsisting only on the most revolting reptiles and unwholesome plants which grew on the ramparts,\* negotiations were entered into for a surrender. Cassan, the governor, at first proposed to capitulate, on condition of being allowed to retire into France with six pieces of cannon ; but this was positively refused, as Wellington's instructions were peremptory that the garrison must surrender at discretion. Upon this refusal hostilities were resumed, and the governor undermined some of the bastions, threatening to blow them up, and cut his way sword in hand to France, as Brennier had done at Almeida three years before. But three days more of hunger so tamed the spirit and reduced the strength of the garrison, that they were unequal to such an effort : Wellington's orders were positive, if such an attempt were made, to give no quarter to the governor or officers, and to decimate the garrison. Fortunately for the honour of England, and the fame of her chief, it was not necessary to have recourse to such extremities, which, in the case of the soldiers and inferior officers at least, would have been of very doubtful legality and unquestionable barbarity.<sup>2</sup> On

<sup>2</sup> Belm. iv. 776, 779, Jones' Sieges, ii. 5, 11. Nap. vi. 290, 294. Wellington to Don Carlos de Espana, 20th Oct. 1813. Gurw. xi. 210. Tor. v. 363, 369.

\* Dogs and cats were esteemed a luxury ; rats and mice had long been sought out with avidity ; and several soldiers had died from eating the roots of hemlock which grew on the ramparts.—BELMAS, iv. 774.

the 31st the garrison surrendered at discretion, to the number of three thousand, including eight hundred sick and wounded, and were made prisoners of war.

Santona was now the only fortress which remained to the French in the north-west of Spain ; and though Lord Aylmer, with his gallant brigade, was ordered to embark at Passages to aid in the reduction of that place, yet circumstances prevented the design being carried into effect, and it continued blockaded to the end of the war. Meantime Soult was at first anxious to abandon the lines in front of Bayonne, and proposed to debouch by Jaca with fifty thousand men into Aragon, unite with Suchet, who, he thought, might join him with thirty thousand more, and a hundred pieces of cannon, and with their combined forces again invade Spain, maintaining the war on the resources of that country, instead of the now exhausted provinces of the south of France. But this project, which afforded by far the most feasible plan for averting from the imperial dominions the horrors of invasion, was rendered abortive by the obstinacy of Napoleon, in insisting upon the retention of so many fortresses in Catalonia by Suchet, which so reduced his effective force in the field, that, after providing a body of men to watch the Anglo-Sicilian army, he could not operate in Aragon with any respectable body. Suchet accordingly at once agreed to Soult's proposals, and declared his willingness to ascend the Ebro with thirty thousand men and a hundred guns, to co-operate with him in driving the Allies over that river ; but only on condition that he got the artillerymen and draught horses of Soult's army sent to Catalonia, his own being absorbed in the fortresses. This was out of the question, as it would have entirely paralysed Soult himself ; and, moreover, Suchet declared that he must, in conformity with the Emperor's instructions, return, as soon as the English were driven across the Ebro, to his principal duty, that of watching over the fortresses in Catalonia.<sup>1\*</sup> Thus, this project of joint operations

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28.  
Soult's designs, at this period, of foreign operations.

<sup>1</sup> See Belm. i. 267. Soult to Duc de Feltre, Oct. 1813. Ibid. i. 693. Suchet, li. 348, and App. 454.

\* " Informed as you are by the letters of the Duke of Dalmatia of the part assigned in his projects to the armies of Aragon and Catalonia, you will from this moment take measures to concur with all your disposable means in the general plan of joint operations ; so as to be in a condition, the moment that I transmit to you his majesty the Emperor's sanction, to take the field : *taking care, however, to leave the fortresses of Catalonia and Aragon well garrisoned,*

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came to nothing ; and meanwhile Wellington's passage of the Bidassoa and invasion of France rendered all idea of offensive hostilities in the Peninsula out of the question, and fixed the theatre of war permanently in the south of France. A striking proof of the wisdom of the British government in urging, against Wellington's opinion, that bold undertaking.

29.  
Description  
of Soult's  
position on  
the Nivelle.

Soult made good use of the month's respite afforded him by the prolonged resistance of the garrison of Pampluna, to strengthen to a most extraordinary degree his position on the Nivelle. It consisted of three lines of defence, one behind another, which equalled those of Torres Vedras in strength and solidity. They ran along a line of hills forming the northern boundary, for the most part, of the valley of the Nivelle, and stretched from the sea and St Jean de Luz on the right, to Mount Daren on the left : from thence to St Jean Pied-de-Port, the line was protected by a ridge of rocks, so rugged that neither army could pretend to cross them. Numerous field-

*and in the best possible state of defence.*"—DUC DE FELTRE, *Ministre de la Guerre*, au DUC D'ALBUFERA, 13th Sept. 1813 ; SUCHET, ii. 454, *Pièces Just.*

"In examining the dispositions which your excellency has directed to meet the case of the army being ordered to commence active operations, his majesty sees, as well as your excellency, grave objections to the plan as at present combined. It leaves the frontier altogether unguarded ; and whatever movement you may execute with a corps in the field, *the first and indispensable condition to its commencement is, to leave a strong garrison in Barcelona, Figueras, and Puycerda.*"—DUC DE FELTRE au DUC D'ALBUFERA, 15th Nov. 1813 ; SUCHET, ii. 457.

"On the 7th October Lord Wellington crossed the Bidassoa, and transported the war into the French territory. By that stroke every thing was changed, and offensive operations became no longer possible to the French armies. Marshal Suchet, however, conceived he would still have time to succour the distant garrisons in the east of Spain : and he flattered himself he should be in a condition at their head to make an effort and march upon the Ebro. The minister at war entered into his views ; and the Emperor himself, when he returned to Paris, breaking the silence which he had previously preserved on the projects submitted to him, seemed to approve of their execution. *Unhappily he directed that, when the army marched, a portion of it should be left in garrison at Barcelona, Figueras, and Puycerda.* The Duc D'Albufera besought in vain for the combinations promised in that event to enable him to march. He received proofs of confidence, but no increase of force. He grieved at seeing the precious time pass away, while nothing was done : he desired not less ardently than the government to deliver the garrisons, but he had not the means of realising his wishes."—SUCHET, *Mémoires*, ii. 348, 349.

Colonel Napier (vi. 282, 284) represents the failure of this well-conceived project, of joint operations on the part of Soult and Suchet, as the result of the latter throwing unnecessary and unfounded difficulties in the way of its execution. But it is plain, from the correspondence above quoted, that it in reality arose from the invincible repugnance which the Emperor felt to give up any of the great fortresses his arms had conquered, which necessarily deprived Suchet of the means of carrying it into execution, and was part of the same system which caused him to lose such noble armies in the garrisons on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula.



works constructed on every eminence, especially on the right, where the great road to St Jean de Luz and Bayonne crossed the ridge, protected the line in every part where it appeared not to be adequately secured by the obstacles of nature. A second line in rear of the former ran from St Jean de Luz on the right to Cambo on the left, and embraced the camps of Espelette and Suraide, and the camp of Sarre, the principal points where the French forces were assembled. A third line was established behind Santa Pé, on the road to Ustaritz; but the redoubts on it were only commenced. Those on the two former were completed, and armed with heavy guns drawn from the arsenal of Bayonne. Soult having been reinforced by sixteen thousand conscripts, had eighty thousand effective combatants under his orders, of whom seventy thousand were in the field, and could be relied on for active operations. The right, near St Jean de Luz, under Reille, consisted of three divisions of infantry: Clausel in the centre guarded the redoubts behind Sarre with three divisions; the left, under D'Erlon, of two divisions, was behind D'Ainhoe. Foy, with his division, was on the extreme left, between St Jean Pied-de-Port and Bidarray, to threaten the Allied right, and act as circumstances might require.<sup>1</sup>

The heavy rains usual in the end of autumn being over, and fine weather having returned, Wellington, on the 9th November, prepared for a general attack. After carefully surveying the enemy's position, he judged that it was weakest in the centre, in the opening between the Rhune mountains and the bridge of Amotz, over the Nivelle, and it was there accordingly that he resolved to make his principal effort. His plan of operations was thus arranged. Hill, with the right wing, consisting of the second and sixth divisions, under Stewart and Clinton, Murillo's Spaniards, and two Portuguese brigades, was to assail the enemy's left, behind D'Ainhoe. The right centre, under Beresford, consisting of the third, fourth, and seventh divisions, under the command of Generals Colville, Cole, and Le Cor, were to direct their attack against the redoubts in front of Sarre and the heights behind it, supported on the left centre by Giron's Spaniards, who were to attack the slopes situated to the

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<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Cong. xxii.  
286, 287.  
Pellot, 70,  
71. Nap. vi.  
332, 333.  
Tor. v. 370.

30.  
Wellington's  
plan of  
attack.  
Nov. 9.

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\* Murray's  
General  
Orders.  
Wyld, 142,  
143. Welling-  
ton to Lord  
Bathurst,  
Nov. 13,  
1813. Gurw.  
xi. 280, 281.  
Tor. vi. 371,  
372.

31.

Battle of the  
Nivelle, and  
storming of  
the Petite  
Rhune.

westward of Sarre. General Alten, with the light division and Longa's Spaniards, was in the first instance to attack the heights of La Petite Rhune, which the enemy still held as an advanced redoubt in front of the middle of his line, and having carried them, to co-operate in the general attack on the centre : while Sir John Hope, who had succeeded Graham in the command of the left wing, consisting chiefly of Freyre's Spaniards, was to engage the enemy's attention by a feigned attack on their right, near the sea, on the hills in front of St Jean de Luz. Thus Hill and Beresford's corps, forming a mass of forty thousand admirable infantry, of whom above thirty thousand were British and Portuguese, were to be thrown on the weakest part of the enemy's line in the centre, near the bridge of Amotz, between Clausel's and D'Erlon's corps. It will be seen from these directions how many of England's best generals, Picton, Dalhousie, Leith, Oswald, and others, were absent from ill health, or other unavoidable causes ; but, on the other hand, the posts assigned to the Spaniards in the fight, told how sensibly their discipline and efficacy had improved under Wellington's directions in the course of the campaign.<sup>1</sup>

The action began at daylight by an assault on the enemy's fortified outworks on the Lesser Rhune, which was so far in advance of their main line that it required to be carried before the general attack could commence. This fort, perched on a craggy summit, surrounded on three sides by precipices two hundred feet high, was accessible only on the east by a long narrow ridge, which in that direction descended towards Sarre, in the valley of the Nivelle. The troops destined for this operation, consisting of the light division under Alten on the left, and Giron's Andalusians on the right, had been formed, concealed from the enemy, as near as possible to their respective points of attack on the evening of the 9th : and at the signal, on the following morning, of three guns from the lofty summit of Atchubia, they sprang up ; the level rays of the sun glanced on ten thousand bayonets, and immediately the rugged sides of the Petite Rhune rang with the thunder of cannon, and were enveloped in smoke. The French fired fast from the summit of their inaccessible cliffs ; but the 43d, which

headed the attack of the light division, pressed boldly upward, and the first redoubt was soon carried. From thence to the second was an ascent almost precipitous, to be surmounted only by narrow paths, which, amidst the steep crags, wound up to the summit. There a desperate conflict, bayonet against bayonet, man against man, ensued; but the enthusiastic valour of the 43d overcame every opposition, and the fort was won. Upon this, the French retreated to their last stronghold, at the summit of the Petite Rhune, called the Donjon; and here the impetuous assault of the 43d was stayed by a natural ditch or cleft in the rocks, fifteen feet deep. Soon, however, the Portuguese Caçadores came to their aid; the 52d threatened them on the other side, and the outer works were abandoned. Upon this, the 43d with a loud shout leaped down into the cleft: in a minute the old walls were scaled, and the British colours planted on the highest summit of the castle.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, Kemp, though sorely wounded, kept the field, and expelled the enemy from the elevated plateau from which La Petite Rhune arose; and the French, driven out of all their advanced positions, fell back in great confusion to their main line of defence behind Ascain, leaving a battalion which was made prisoners at the summit of the mountain.<sup>1</sup>

While the rocky summits of the Lesser Rhune were thus wrested from the enemy, the fourth and seventh divisions in the right centre under Beresford, moved against the redoubt of St Barbara and Granada, and eighteen guns placed in battery against them soon sent such a stream of shot upward into the works, that the garrison, upon seeing the troops advancing with the scaling ladders, leaped down from their intrenchments and fled. Far on the right, Hill, after a long and difficult night's march, had got, a little before seven, to the front of the enemy's extreme left, and after driving them from the rugged positions immediately opposite, near Urdax, inclined upwards, and, with the aid of the sixth division, soon approached the broken ground where D'Erlon's redoubts were placed, near the bridge of Amotz. To the spectator on the Petite Rhune, which overlooked the whole of this complicated battle-field,<sup>2</sup> it presented a scene

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<sup>1</sup> Nap. vi.  
338, 341.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 288.  
Wellington  
to Lord Bath-  
urst, Nov.  
13, 1813.  
Gurw. xi.  
281, 282.

32.  
Progress of  
the action on  
the right,  
and in the  
centre.

<sup>2</sup> Nap. vi.  
342, 343.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 267.  
268. Welling-  
ton to Lord  
Bathurst,  
Oct. 13, 1813.  
Gurw. xi.  
281, 282.  
Tor. v. 37  
373.

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33.  
Retreat of  
the French,  
and their  
route on many  
points.

of unequalled grandeur. Far to the left, Hope's Spaniards were coming into action, and a hundred guns below, answered by as many on the summits of the rocks, made a deafening roar in the lesser hills near the sea; while in the centre and right, fifty thousand men, rushing like an impetuous torrent down the slopes of the Atchubia mountain, with loud shouts chased the receding French divisions into the lower grounds near the Nivelle.

The enemy's troops, retreating at various points at the same time through broken ground, and having their line of defence pierced through in many places, were in no condition to resist this terrible onset, and gave way with an ease that proved that long-continued disaster had weakened their spirit. Clausel's divisions in the centre, in particular, yielded in a manner which called forth the severe animadversions of that general and Marshal Soult.\* Clinton, with the sixth division, broke through all the works guarded by D'Erlon's men, which covered the approaches to the bridge of Amotz, and then, wheeling to the right, attacked and carried in the most gallant style the enemy's redoubts behind D'Ainhoe, so as entirely to turn their defences in that quarter. The Portuguese division and Byng's brigade, with equal vigour, stormed the redoubts to which they were opposed in front of D'Ainhoe; and the French of D'Armagnac's division, finding that their line of defence was entirely broken through, set fire to their huts, and retreated behind Santa Pé, nearly two leagues to the rear. The rough nature of the ground caused the French left to fall into confusion while executing this retrograde movement; and Abbé's division, which stood next on the line, was entirely uncovered on its flank, and exposed to the most imminent danger. That brave general, however, stood firm, and for a short time arrested the flood of conquest; but D'Erlon, seeing his danger, at length ordered him to retreat.<sup>1</sup> Couroux's division, which extended from Sarre to Amotz, was at the same time broken through at several

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
288, 289.  
Nap. vi. 342,  
345. Pellot,  
72, 73. Wel-  
lington to  
Lord Bath-  
urst, Nov. 13,  
1813. Gurw.  
xi. 282, 283.

\* "General Clausel was the first to declare with regret, that the divisions under his orders had not in all cases done their duty. If they had fought with the ardour which they had evinced in previous combats, and subsequently showed, the enemy, in spite of his superiority of number, would not have forced our lines without a loss of 15,000 or 20,000 men."—PELLOT, *Guerre des Pyrénées*, 73.

points by the third and sixth divisions, and its gallant commander mortally wounded. Though occasionally arrested by the formidable redoubts which lay in their way, the flood of war did not the less roll impetuously on, until these isolated landmarks, cut off from each other, were overwhelmed, as a stream tide, breaking on rock-bestrewn shores, rushes round the black masses which obstruct its rise, till, surrounded by the foaming surge, they are finally submerged.

Clausel's right wing, however, forming the French right centre, consisting of Taupin's division and a large body of conscripts, still stood firm; and the position which they occupied, resting on three large redoubts near Ascaïn, was such as to afford a fair prospect of rallying the fugitives, and still retrieving the day. But at this critical juncture the light division, which had won the Petite Rhune, pressing forward with unabated vigour, led by the gallant 52d, attacked Taupin's front; and Longa's skirmishers, having turned the Lesser Rhune and approached their flank, the French, seized with a sudden panic, broke and fled. Four regiments of the whole division alone remained unbroken, and the seventh and fourth British division quickly assailed them in front and flank, and they were put to the rout. The signal redoubt, the strongest in the whole French line, situated on a high hill in the centre, was now left to its fate, and Colborne, at the head of the 52d, advanced to storm it; but two attacks were repulsed with heavy loss, though on the third, the garrison, seeing themselves entirely cut off and surrounded, surrendered at discretion. During this rout of the right centre, Clausel's divisions fled through the Nivelle in great disorder; and Soult, in extreme alarm, hurried from St Jean de Luz, with all his reserves, to endeavour to arrest the progress of defeat. Wellington, upon seeing the force which was thus ready to be thrown upon the flank of his victorious centre when hurrying on in the tumult of success, wisely halted the fourth and seventh divisions, and Giron's Spaniards, upon the northern slope of the heights they had won, looking down upon the enemy's camp at Sarre. No sooner, however, had the sixth division, which was in reserve, come up, than the pursuit was renewed;<sup>1</sup> the whole British

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34.  
Rout of the  
French right  
centre, and  
completion of  
the victory.

<sup>1</sup> Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 13, 1813. Gurw. xi. 282, 283. Nap. vi. 349, 351. Tor. v. 372, 373. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 288, 289.

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centre crossed the Nivelle, drove the enemy from the heights beyond it, which formed his second line of defence, and established themselves on that advantageous ground, about two leagues in advance of the position occupied by them in the morning. Upon this the enemy's right, under Reille, which had been engaged all day with Freyre's Spaniards, fell back also, and St Jean de Luz and Ascain were evacuated, and the whole line of the Nivelle, with its superb positions, and six miles of intrenchments, fell into the hands of the Allies.

35.  
The French  
retire to the  
intrenched  
camp in  
front of  
Bayonne.  
Nov. 11.

Next morning the victors advanced in order of battle at all points. Hope, with the left, forded the Nivelle above Bidart; Beresford, with the centre, moved direct upon Arbonne; and Hill, with the right, occupied Espelette and Suraide, and approached Cambo. During the battle on the preceding day, Foy, who with his division was in front of the Puerta de Maya, had gained some success against Mina and Murillo's Spaniards, to whom he was opposed, and captured a considerable part of their baggage. But the defeat of the main army obliged him also to fall back, and he effected his retreat, not without difficulty, by Cambo and Ustaritz, on the following day. Soult had now rallied his army in his third line of intrenchments, about eight miles in rear of the first; but the troops were too dispirited, and the works in too unfinished a state, to think of defending them; wherefore, abandoning that line also altogether, he retired into the intrenched camp he had constructed in front of Bayonne, leaving the whole intermediate country in the hands of the Allies. In this battle Wellington lost two thousand six hundred and ninety-four men; but the loss of the French was four thousand two hundred and sixty-five, including fourteen hundred prisoners. They abandoned

<sup>1</sup> Wellington  
to Lord Bath-  
urst, Nov. 13,  
1813. Gurw.  
xi. 284. Belm.  
i. 268. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
290, 291.  
Pellet, 73,  
74. Nap. vi.  
352, 353.

fifty-one pieces of cannon, and all their field magazines; and, what was of more importance, the great mountain barrier, on which they had been labouring assiduously for three months, was broken through and captured; the Allies were firmly established in the French territory, with the harbour of St Jean de Luz to bring supplies of all sorts into the heart of their cantonments;<sup>1</sup> and the flames of war had been seen lighted upon the summit

of their mountain screen, far and wide through the plains and valleys of France.

Though Wellington, however, had thus driven the French from their position, and gained very considerable extension for the cantonments of his troops, yet his own situation was far from being free from anxiety, and even peril. He was uneasy for his right flank so long as Soult held, which he still did, the *tête-du-pont* over the Nive; and, in consequence, Hill received orders to menace it on the 16th. This was accordingly done, and at his approach the French retired across the river and blew up the bridge, which effectually secured his right flank. But the disorders of the Spanish and Portuguese soldiers in the Spanish villages, as well as the pillaging of the British, was a more serious and durable subject of anxiety. With the latter, plunder was the result merely of the passing desire of gain and intoxication; but with the former it had a deeper origin, for it was founded on a profound thirst for vengeance, arising from the innumerable evils of a similar description which the French troops had inflicted upon every part of the Peninsula. There was hardly a soldier in the Spanish or Portuguese armies who could not tell the tale of a parent or brother murdered, a sister or daughter ravished, or a patrimony destroyed, from the violence of the French soldiers, or the more lasting scourge of their contributions. They not unnaturally imagined, that now that they had got into France, it was their turn to indulge in the same excesses, and satiate at once their thirst for vengeance and desire for plunder, on the blood and the property of the wretched inhabitants.\* Rapine, accordingly, immediately began. On the very day of the battle, Freyre's and Longa's

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36.

General disposition to pillage among Wellington's troops.

1 Nap. vi.  
366. Gurw.  
xi. 325.  
Beauchamp,  
Guerre de  
1814, ii. 31,  
32.

\* "We ran up and found a poor old French peasant lying dead at the bottom of the garden. A bullet had passed through his head, and his thin gray hairs were dyed with his own blood. A *Caçadore* rushed out, and attempted to elude us. On entering, we saw an old woman, the wife of the peasant, lying dead in the kitchen. The desperate Portuguese did not attempt to deny having perpetrated these murders: he seemed, on the contrary, wound up to a pitch of frenzy,—'They murdered my father,' said he; 'they cut my mother's throat, and they ravished my sister before my eyes; and I vowed at the time I would put to death the first French family that fell into my hands;—you may hang me if you will, but I have kept my oath, and care not for dying.' He was hanged, however; indeed, no fewer than eighteen were suspended, on this and the following days, to the branches of trees. Such extreme measures were requisite to check the ardent thirst for vengeance in the Peninsular soldiers."—*Subaltern*, 146.

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soldiers began pillaging Ascaín the moment that they entered it, and murdered several of the inhabitants; Mina's battalions on the right, some of which had shaken off all authority, dispersed themselves, marauding through the mountains; the Portuguese and British soldiers of the left had begun the same disorders, and two persons had been killed in one small town.

37.  
His vigorous  
efforts to  
arrest it.

Natural as the feelings were which led to these excesses on the part of the Peninsular soldiers, they were utterly abhorrent to the disposition of Wellington; they were subversive of the principles on which he had throughout maintained the contest, and were only the more dangerous that they arose from such deeply moved passions of the human heart. Immediate and decisive, accordingly, were the measures which he adopted to remedy the evil. On the 12th, though in hourly expectation of a battle, he put to death all the Spanish marauders he could take in the act; and as the Peninsular generals were tardy or reluctant in carrying his orders into execution, and even remonstrated against them, he at once sent the whole Spaniards, except Murillo's division, which had conducted itself properly, out of France; obliging Freyre's Galicians to retire into Biscay, Giron's Andalusians into the valley of Bastan, and Longa's men over the Ebro; while Mina's mutinous battalions were disarmed and sent across the Pyrenees. By these vigorous measures, he deprived himself, at a period when he much required it, of the aid of twenty-five thousand now experienced troops. But the effect was decisive:—it marked the lofty character of the man who would rather arrest success, even at its flood-tide, than purchase it by iniquity. It restored his authority in the army, and at once checked its excesses; and, by dissipating the fears of the French peasantry, brought them back to their homes, where, finding the strictest discipline established, and every thing paid for in ready money, an amicable intercourse was immediately established between them and the invaders.<sup>1</sup>

Wellington  
to Lord Bath-  
urst, Nov.  
27, 1813.  
Gurw. xi.  
325. Nap. vi.  
366. Wellin-  
gton to Freyre,  
Nov. 14,  
1813. Gurw.  
xi. 287, 288.  
Beauchamp,  
Guerre de  
1814, ii. 31,  
32.

But although the disorders with which he was immediately surrounded were effectually checked by these energetic steps, it was not so easy a matter for the English general to make head against the dangers which were accumulating in his rear, and which threatened to



snatch the fruits of victory from his grasp at the very time when they were within his reach. The democratic government at Cadiz, actuated by the furious passions and insatiable ambition which could not fail to be engendered by vesting the supreme power in an assembly elected by the universal suffrage of an old community, was indefatigable in its efforts to throw obstacles in his way, and excite the national passions against him. A slight reverse would have blown the flame thus kindled into a conflagration; and it was only by the unbroken series of his successes that the Peninsular confederacy, at the moment when it had triumphed over all his external enemies, was prevented from falling the victim to unworthy jealousy and prejudiced ambition. To such a length did they carry their hostility, that though Wellington had nominally forty thousand Spaniards under his orders, he did not venture to advance them into France, because their total state of destitution rendered pillage almost unavoidable; and immediately after he had borne the British standards in triumph across the Pyrenees, he was so thwarted in all his designs by the democratic leaders at Cadiz, that he actually resigned the general command of their armies, and recommended to the British government entirely to withdraw their army from the Peninsula if their demands were not acceded to.<sup>1</sup>\*

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38.  
Violence of  
the demo-  
cracy at  
Cadiz.

<sup>1</sup> Gurw. xi.  
327. Wel-  
lington to  
Lord Bath-  
urst, Nov. 27.  
1813. Nap.  
vi. 424, 425.

Nor were his difficulties less formidable at Lisbon,

\* "It is quite clear to me, that if we do not beat down the democracy at Cadiz, the cause is lost; how that is to be done, God knows."—WELLINGTON to SIR H. WELLESLEY, 16th October 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 200.

"The persons who propagate the libels against the British army in Spain, are not the people of the country, but the officers of government, who would not dare to conduct themselves in this manner if they did not know that their conduct would be agreeable to their employers. If this spirit is not checked, we must expect that the people at large will soon behave to us in the same manner; and we shall have no friend, or none who will avow himself as such, in Spain. A crisis is approaching in our connexion in Spain; and, if you do not bring the government and nation to their senses before they go too far, you will inevitably lose all the advantages which you might expect from the services you have rendered them. I recommend to you to complain seriously of the conduct of government and their servants: to remind them that Cadiz, Carthage—and, I believe, Ceuta—were garrisoned with British troops at their own earnest request, and that, if they had not been so garrisoned, they would long ere this have fallen into the hands of the enemy, and Ceuta of the Moors. I recommend to you to demand as a security for the safety of the King's troops, against the criminal disposition of the government and their servants, that a British garrison should be admitted to San Sebastian, with the intimation that, if this demand is not complied with, the troops should be withdrawn. And, if this is not conceded, I recommend you to withdraw the troops, be the consequences what they may, and to be prepared accordingly."—WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, 27th November 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 327.

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39.  
And obstacles  
thrown in  
Wellington's  
way at  
Lisbon.

<sup>1</sup> Wellington  
to Lord Bath-  
urst, Nov. 27,  
1813. *Gurw.*  
*xi.* 327.  
*Nap. vi.* 424,  
434.

40.  
Wellington  
prepares to  
force the  
passage of  
the Nive.

<sup>2</sup> *Vict. et*  
*Conq. xxii.*  
*291.* *Nap.*  
*vi.* 368, 369.  
*Pellot, 79,*  
*80.*

where the ample British subsidy was so dissipated by official corruption, that not one-half of it reached its proper destination: the muleteers of the army were two years, the soldiers nine months in arrear of their pay; the magazines were empty, the stores deficient; although the subsidy was fully adequate to have kept all these services abundantly supplied. Fortunately the Spanish authorities had still sufficient recollection of their defeats to appreciate the consequences of being left to their own resources; the resignation of Wellington was not accepted; the stern measure of sending back the marauders to Spain restored discipline to the Peninsular armies; and Wellington was again enabled, with undiminished forces, to renew the career of victory in the south of France.<sup>1</sup>

While Wellington was thus experiencing, in the rancour and jealousies which were accumulating in his rear in the Peninsula, which he had delivered, the baseness of factious opposition, and the usual ingratitude of men to those from whom they have received inestimable services, he was preparing to follow up his successes over Marshal Soult, and confound his democratic calumniators at Cadiz by fresh obligations. His vast army, eighty thousand strong even after the Spaniards were withdrawn, and powerful in artillery and cavalry—the former numbering a hundred pieces, and the latter eight thousand six hundred sabres—were restrained in the contracted space which they occupied; and he was anxious to extend his cantonments, and gain possession of more fertile districts, by forcing the passage of the Nive, and throwing the enemy entirely back under the cannon of Bayonne. But the heavy and long-continued winter rains, which in the deep clay of Bearn rendered the roads knee-deep of mud, and wholly impassable for artillery or chariots, prevented him from undertaking any offensive operations till the end of the first week in December. At that period, however, the weather cleared up, and the Nive having become fordable, he brought up fifty pieces of cannon, and the passage of the river was attempted; an effort which led to one of the most desperate and sanguinary actions of the war.<sup>2</sup>

Soult's situation on the Nive, though strong, was full of difficulties. Bayonne, situated at the confluence of that river and the Adour, commanded the passage of both;

and though a weak fortress of the third order, it had now, from its situation, and the intrenched camp of which it formed a part, become a point of first-rate importance. The camp, being commanded by the guns of the fortress immediately in its rear, could not be attacked in front, on which account the French general stationed only his centre there, composed of six divisions under D'Erlon. The right wing, consisting of Reille's two divisions and Villatte's reserve, was placed to the westward of the fortress on the lower Adour, where there was a flotilla of gunboats; and the approach to it was covered by a swamp and artificial inundation. The left under Clausel, posted to the eastward of Bayonne, stretched from its right to the Nive, and was protected partly by the flooded grounds, and partly by a large fortified house which had been converted into an advanced work. The country in front consisted of deep clay soil, and was much enclosed and intersected by woods and hedge-rows. Four divisions of D'Erlon's men occupied it beyond the Nive, in front of Ustaritz, and as far as Cambo; the remainder being in reserve, stationed on a strong range of heights in front of Mousserolles, stretching from Villefranque on the Nive, almost to Old Mouguerre on the Adour. The great advantage of this position was, that the troops, in case of disaster, might securely find refuge under the cannon of Bayonne; while the general-in-chief, having an interior and protected line of communication through that fortress, could at pleasure, like Napoleon at Dresden, throw the weight of his forces from one flank to another, when unforeseen and unguarded against, upon the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

But although, in a military point of view, the position of Soult was thus favourable, his political situation was very different; and it required all his perseverance, and vigour of administrative powers, to make head against the difficulties which were hourly accumulating round the sinking empire. His soldiers, though depressed by defeat, were still brave and docile. It was the difficulty of procuring supplies which was the real evil; it was the system of making war maintain war, which now pressed with terrible but just severity on the falling state. Money there was none to be got from headquarters in Paris; and the usual resource of the imperial government on such

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41.  
Soult's position in front of Bayonne.

<sup>1</sup> Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
290, 291.  
Nap. vi. 369,  
370. Belm.  
i. 269.

42.  
His political  
difficulties.

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emergencies, that of levying contributions, however warmly and unanimously approved of so long as these were laid on other countries, was now complained of as the most intolerable of all grievances when they fell upon its own. Nor is it surprising that this universal indignation burst forth when the imperial system of government came to be really felt in France itself; for we have the authority of official documents for the assertion, that in Navarre, for some years before the French were driven out of the country, the requisitions had often amounted to two hundred per cent of the whole income of the landowners and farmers. So oppressive were the exactions of the French authorities felt to be, that numbers migrated into the British lines, where they not only were subjected to no such burdens, but found a ready and well-paid market for all their commodities. An official letter written from Bayonne at this period said, "The English general's policy, and the good discipline he maintains, do us more harm than ten battles—every peasant wishes to be under his protection." The conscripts raised in all the southern provinces were indeed marched in great numbers into Bayonne; but the ancient spirit of the imperial armies was gone; they deserted by hundreds at a time, although every possible care was taken to treat them with gentleness, to spare their inexperienced frames, and to set them only on duty in the interior of the fortress.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Soult's corresp. MS. in Nap. vi. 506, 507. Pellot, 79, 80. Toreno, v. 369.

43.  
Wellington's  
dispositions  
for the  
attack.

Having taken his resolution to force his adversary's position in front of Bayonne, Wellington made the following dispositions for the attack:—Sir John Hope and General Charles Alten, with the first, fifth, and light divisions, Vandeleur's cavalry, and twelve guns, in all twenty-four thousand combatants, were to drive back the French advanced posts along the whole front of the intrenched camp from the Nive to the sea. On the right, Sir Rowland Hill with the second and Portuguese divisions, Vivian's and Victor Alten's cavalry, and Ross's horse artillery, was to put himself in motion in the night between the 8th and 9th, so as to pass the Nive by the fords of Cambo at daybreak on the latter day, and advance by the great road from St Jean Pied-de-Port towards Bayonne. At the same time Berèsford, in the centre, with the third

and sixth divisions, was to cross the Nive by bridges to be thrown over it during the night; while the fourth and seventh divisions were to be in reserve a little in the rear, concealed from the enemy, but ready to support any part of the line which might require it. The main attack was to be made by the centre and right: the principal object of the advance by Hope, on the left, was to acquire an accurate view of the nature of the enemy's works between Bayonne and the sea, on the lower Adour. Wellington's object in these movements was not to force the intrenched camp before Bayonne, which, from its being under the guns of that fortress, could not be effected without very heavy loss; but to place his right upon the Adour, after crossing the Nive, whereby the enemy, already distressed for provisions, would lose the means of communication with the interior by the aid of that river, and would be compelled to fall back to other and more distant quarters, from which to draw his resources.<sup>1</sup>

The requisite preparatory movements having been made with perfect accuracy on the night of the 8th, a huge fire, lighted on a height behind Cambo at daybreak on the 9th, gave the signal of attack. The French had broken down the bridges at Ustaritz in the centre; but the island which connected them was in the possession of the British, and the passage was immediately forced under cover of a heavy fire of artillery. D'Armagnac's division, which lay opposite, was driven back by the sixth division. At the same time, Hill's troops, under the cover of artillery, crossed over on the right above and below Cambo, and drove the French left wing back on the great road from St Jean Pied-de-Port to Bayonne. With such vigour was this onset made, that Foy, who commanded in that quarter, was separated from his men, and driven across the fields, with a few followers, towards Hasparren. No sooner, however, did the French troops behold the bale-fire lighted behind Cambo, than they all flew to arms; Abbé's division, which was nearest soon joined Foy's men, and their united forces took a position on a range of heights running parallel to the Adour, with Villefranque on their right. At the same time Hope, with the left wing, moved forward by the great road from St Jean de Luz towards Bayonne; drove in all the enemy's advanced posts after a

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<sup>1</sup> Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gurw. xi. 365. Murray's Gen. Orders in Wyld, 147. Wellington to Sir J. Hope, Dec. 9, 1813. Wyld, 150.

44.  
Forcing of the passage of the Nive on the French centre and left.  
Dec. 9.

CHAP.  
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1813.  
1 Wellington  
to Lord  
Bathurst,  
Dec. 14,  
1813. Gurw.  
xi. 365, 366.  
Nap. vi. 373,  
374. Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
291, 292.

vigorous resistance, and approached so near to his intrenchments under that fortress, as completely to achieve the object intrusted to him in the general plan of operations. Shortly after noon, the Portuguese of the sixth division having come up, Hill attacked D'Armagnac's troops at Villefranque and the heights adjoining, and after some sharp fighting and one repulse, drove them out of the former, and established himself in strength on the latter, the French retiring, amidst a heavy rain, by deep and almost impassable roads, towards Bayonne.<sup>1</sup>

45.  
Soult's able  
plan for  
retrieving his  
affairs.

The passage of the Nive was now forced, the French left driven under the cannon of Bayonne, and the English general established in a position from whence he could at pleasure, by a slight extension of his right, intercept the navigation of the Upper Adour, the great artery by which the French army was supplied, and which it was the chief object of the attack to cut off. But though this passage had thus been surprised, and the operations successful, his situation had become one of no inconsiderable peril. The Nive, flowing in an oblique direction from south-east to north-west, cut his army in two; while Soult with his troops concentrated in the intrenched camp, and enjoying ample means of communicating at pleasure, by the bridges of Bayonne, from the one bank to the other, might, unknown to the Allies, throw the weight of his forces on either half of their army, when deprived of the means of co-operation with the other. He immediately resolved to take advantage of this singular good fortune, and did so with an ability and decision which would have done honour to Napoleon himself. During the night he drew back the whole of his troops into the intrenched camp, yielding thus to the Allies the ground they had won on his left, and permitting them to extend themselves to the Adour, and intercept his principal communications by that river. But while thus abandoning in appearance the whole objects of the contest, he was preparing a blow which was calculated to effect, and had well-nigh produced, a total change in the fortunes of the campaign. He gave orders in the night for the whole troops to hold themselves in readiness to start at daylight;<sup>2</sup> and, after providing for the defence of the intrenched camp and the fortress, early on the morn-

<sup>2</sup> Wellington  
to Lord  
Bathurst,  
Dec. 14,  
1813. Gurw.  
xi. 367, 368.  
Nap. vi. 375,  
376. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
293. Belm.  
i. 269.

ing of the 10th he issued forth on the left of the Nive, with nearly his whole disposable forces, about sixty thousand strong, to assail one-half of the Allies stationed in that quarter, not mustering more than thirty thousand combatants.

At daylight this formidable apparition burst upon the British left, by which such an onset, after the success of the preceding day, was wholly unexpected. Hope's troops, with the exception of Wilson's Portuguese, deeming the contest over, had retired to their cantonments; the first division was at St Jean de Luz, six miles from the outposts; the light division had orders to retire from Bassussary to Arbonne, nearly four miles in the rear, but had fortunately not begun to move: and the fifth division was near Bidart, so that the troops were scattered in a way of all others the most favourable for being cut up in detail. The British brigades which were left in front, occupied indeed a strong position, stretching along the ridge of Barrouilhet, on the left of the great road to the Bidassoa, and along the ridge of Arcangues on its right; and the country in that direction, much intersected by woods and hedgerows, and capable of being traversed, like La Vendée, only by narrow and deep roads, was very susceptible of defence. But the risk was extreme that the light division, not more than six thousand in number, would be crushed before any succour could arrive for its support. The chateau and church of Arcangues, and the village of the same name, constituted strong points of defence; and three tongues of land extended from its front to the northward by which the enemy must approach; they were held by the 52d, the pickets of the 43d, and the riflemen, while the valleys between them were clothed with copsewoods, which were almost impenetrable. Intrenchments had been ordered to be constructed on a great scale, to strengthen this part of the position; but they were only traced out, and the fourth division, the nearest support, was several miles in rear of the light.<sup>1</sup>

In these circumstances, if Soult had adhered to his original design of massing his whole army together on the plateau of Bassussary, and falling at once on the light division at Arcangues, it must inevitably have been

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1813.

46.  
Situation of  
the British  
left and  
centre at this  
period.  
Dec. 10.

<sup>1</sup> Nap. vi.  
377, 379.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
393. Pellot,  
82, 83.

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47.

Desperate  
combats at  
Arcangues  
and Bidart.

destroyed. But in the night he changed his plan, and, instead of concentrating his force on one point, divided it into two corps, the one of which, under Clausel, advanced against Arcangues, while the other, led by Reille, moved against Hope by the great road to the Bidassoa. A heavy rain fell in the night; and it was some time after day-break ere the enemy, whose vast accumulation in front of Arcangues was wholly unsuspected, were observed to be lining the hedgerows, and silently stealing up the wooded hollows in front of that village. Kempt, who was with the pickets, no sooner observed these ominous symptoms, than he gave orders to occupy the church and village with his reserves, and there was barely time to complete these preparations when the enemy were upon them. Issuing from the woods and the hollows with loud cries, and all the restored confidence of victory, the French fell upon the pickets on all the tongues of land in front of Arcangues in overwhelming numbers, and with assured anticipation of success. To maintain their ground against such vast odds, would have exposed themselves to certain destruction; and the 43d, 52d, and Rifles, with a Portuguese regiment, fell swiftly back along the narrow necks of land for above a mile, firing all the way; but no sooner had they reached the open ground at their extremity in front of Arcangues, than these incomparable troops suddenly united their seemingly routed bodies, faced about, and presented an impenetrable front to their pursuers. The French, with loud cries, and extraordinary enthusiasm at their now unwonted success, advanced to the attack, and Soult brought up a battery of twelve guns directly in front of Arcangues, which opened a heavy cannonade on the church and village; but the 43d, Rifles, and Portuguese, by an incessant and well-directed fire of small arms, made good their post, while the 52d held the open ground on the left, towards the great road, with invincible courage.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wellington to Lord Bathurst, 14th Dec. 1813. Gurw. xi. 367. Subaltern, 183, 185. Nap. vi. 381, 383. Vict et Conq. xxii. 294.

While this desperate conflict was going on in the centre, in front of Arcangues, a still more sanguinary and doubtful fight had commenced on the left, at Barrouilhet. There the attack was so wholly unexpected, that the first division and Lord Aylmer's brigade were



at St Jean de Luz and Bidart, six miles in the rear, when the action commenced about nine o'clock. At that hour, Reille with two divisions attacked a Portuguese brigade in Anglet, the advanced post of the left, and soon drove them out of that village, and pursued them with heavy loss to the ridge of Barrouilhet, where they rallied on Robinson's brigade of the fifth division, and stood firm. A confused but desperate and bloody conflict immediately ensued along the whole line in that quarter, as the assailants, heated and animated by their success, pushed through the openings in the hedges, at some places penetrating these, in others vigorously repulsed. But by degrees the troops from the rear came up; Lord Aylmer's brigade of the guards, and Bradford's Portuguese, arrived in breathless haste, and relieved Robinson's men, who by this time had suffered severely; and Sir John Hope, who received a severe contusion, and his whole staff, set a noble example of ability, coolness, and devoted valour. Thus time was gained; and meanwhile Wellington, who during the night of the 9th had been on the right bank of the Nive, alarmed by the heavy fire on his left, repaired in person at daybreak to the threatened side of the river, and made the third and sixth divisions cross, while Beresford threw over another bridge to facilitate the passage.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as he arrived near Arcangues, and saw how matters stood, he ordered up in addition the fourth and seventh divisions; and the sight of these imposing masses, which now appeared on the field, so disconcerted Soult, that he suspended all further attacks, and both parties rested on their arms on the field of battle. Just before dark, however, the two fresh divisions of Taupin and Maransin having arrived in the centre, Clausel made a fresh attack on the village of Arcangues, and the Allies were so worn out and reduced in number by incessant fighting all day, that the village and mayor's chateau were both carried; the Portuguese broke and fled, and some of the British regiments began to waver. At that moment, Wellington himself rode up to the troops at the foot of the church—"You must keep your ground, my lads," cried he; "there is nothing behind you—charge!"<sup>2</sup> Instantly a loud shout was raised; the

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48.

Bloody conflict on the left at Barrouilhet.

<sup>1</sup> Gurw. xi. 367, 368. Gleig's Subaltern, 188, 189. Pellot, 83. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 294, 295.

49. Which Wellington with difficulty maintains in person.

<sup>2</sup> Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gurw. xi. 367, 368. Nap. vi. 385, 386. Gleig's Subaltern, 188, 189. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 294, 295. Pellot, 83, 84.

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fugitives on the flank rallied and re-formed line ; a volley was poured in, the bayonets levelled, and the enemy were driven, still obstinately fighting, out of the village and chateau, which remained in possession of the British ; as one bull, his horns close locked in his adversary's, is fairly mastered and pushed back by the superior strength of his antagonist.

50.  
Two Ger-  
man regi-  
ments pass  
over to the  
Allies in the  
night.

Soult's blow, ably conceived and bravely executed, had now been delivered, and failed ; the attack of his concentrated masses on the Allied left had been met and driven back by a small part only of the British force. Still that indefatigable officer did not yet hold himself beat ; instead of being disconcerted by his repulse, he immediately set about fresh combinations to recall victory to his standards. But in the night a disheartening reverse occurred, strikingly manifesting that the fortunes of Napoleon were sinking. Two German regiments, one of Nassau and one of Frankfort, came over to the Allies, and were received with unbounded joy, drums beating and arms presented by the British battalions, who were drawn up to receive them. They were not deserters, but acted in obedience to the command of their prince, who, having joined the ranks of Germany's deliverers on the Rhine, now sent secret instructions to his troops in Soult's army to do the same. Several other German regiments were in Catalonia, and both generals immediately sent advices of what had occurred to the rival chiefs in that province—the one hoping to profit, the other to take warning from the occurrence. Before the intelligence arrived, however, Suchet had already, by the Emperor's orders, disarmed the troops of that race, two thousand four hundred strong, in his army—with a heavy heart, for they were among the best soldiers he had : so that they were merely lost to the French, but not gained to the Allies. Those which came over to Wellington were immediately embarked at St Jean de Luz, and soon after joined the ranks of their countrymen on the banks of the Rhine.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wellington  
to Lord  
Bathurst,  
Dec. 14,  
1813. Gurw.  
xi. 368.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
296. Nap.  
vi. 387.  
Suchet, ii.  
357. Sub-  
altern, 193.

The forenoon of the day following, the 11th, passed without any considerable action ; but about two o'clock Wellington ordered the 9th regiment to make a recon-

noissance on the left towards Pucho, which led to a sharp skirmish at that point, in which the 9th, being at first unsupported, was worsted, but was at length, with difficulty, brought off by the aid of some Portuguese which Hope advanced. Soult upon this, seeing the British unprepared, ordered a general attack on the ridge of Barrouilhet; and it was executed with such vigour and celerity, that the French got into the midst of the British position before they were ready to receive them: and a confused action began with great animosity in the village of Barrouilhet and the adjoining wood. General Hope, however, soon came up with the 85th regiment; and that noble officer, whose overflowing courage ever led him to the front, where the fire was hottest and the danger greatest, was to be seen among the troops, his lofty figure overtopping all the motley throng with which he was surrounded, animating his men by his voice and example.\* By great exertions he at length restored order, and the enemy were repulsed, with a loss of about six hundred on each side; but the fifth division, being now exhausted with fatigue, and much reduced in numbers, was relieved by the first in the front of the position.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing but a severe cannonade, which consumed fruitlessly four hundred men on each side, took place on the 12th; and Soult, seeing that the mass of the enemy's forces was now concentrated on the left of the Adour, resolved to renew his attack on the British right, under Hill, on the right bank of that river. With this view, in the night of the 12th, he again drew the bulk of his forces through Bayonne; and leaving only two divisions and Villatte's reserve in the intrenched camp on the left bank of the Nive, crossed over with

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51.

An attack on the left is repulsed by Hope.

<sup>1</sup> Nap. vi. 388, 389.  
Pellot, 84.  
Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gurw. xi. 369.

52.

Soult passes over again to attack Hill on the right of the Nive.

\* "I have long entertained the highest opinion of Sir John Hope, in common, I believe, with the whole world; and every day's experience convinces me of his worth. We shall lose him, however, if he continues to expose himself to fire as he has done in the last three days; indeed his escape was then wonderful. His hat and coat were shot through in many places, beside the wound in his leg. He places himself among the sharpshooters, without, as they do, sheltering himself from the enemy's fire."—WELLINGTON to COL. TORRENS, 15th Dec. 1813. GURW. xi. 371. The author has a melancholy pleasure in recording these lines to the memory of a noble relative, now no more; whose private worth and patriotic spirit, in the management of his great estates, as Earl of Hopetoun, have enshrined his memory as imperishably in the hearts of his friends and tenantry, as his public services have in the annals of his country.

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seven divisions to the right bank, in order to crush Hill, who had now two divisions only and some brigades—in all fourteen thousand combatants, with fourteen guns, in that quarter. The advantages of the French marshal's position singularly favoured this operation; for his internal line of communication, from the one bank to the other, by the bridge of boats above Bayonne, was three quarters of a league only in length, while Wellington's on the outer circle was no less than three leagues. In this way he succeeded, before daylight on the 13th, in placing thirty-five thousand combatants in Hill's front on the right of the Nive at St PIERRE, while seven thousand more menaced his rear. In expectation of this attack, Wellington ordered the sixth division to cross at daylight again to the right of the Nive; and the fourth division, and a part of the third, were soon after moved in the same direction, by the bridge which Beresford had thrown across two days before; while a division of Galicians was brought forward to St Jean de Luz, and one of Andalusians from the Bastan to the rear of the British army at Itsatsou, and fed from the British magazines. But before any of these succours approached, Hill had, by the native valour of his men, defeated the whole efforts of his antagonists, three times more numerous than themselves.<sup>1</sup>\*

<sup>1</sup> Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gurw. xi. 369. Nap. vi. 389, 392. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 296. Pellot, 84, 85.

53.  
Position of Hill's corps.

His force was stationed on both sides of the high road from Bayonne to St Jean Pied-de-Port, and occupied a line about two miles in length. The centre, consisting of Ashworth's Portuguese and Barnes's British brigade, was strongly posted on a rugged conical height, one side of which was broken with rocks and brushwood, while the other was closed in by high and thick hedges, with twelve guns pointing directly down the great road by which the enemy were to advance. The left, under Pringle, occupied a wooded and broken ridge, in the middle of which was the old chateau of Villefranque; the right, under Byng, was posted on the ridge of Vieux Mouguerre, nearly parallel to the Adour. The French occupied with their pickets a range of counter-heights, nearly parallel, at the distance of about a mile. Between the two armies was a wide valley or basin, open, and commanded in every

\* See App. C, Chap. lxxxiii.

part by the Allied guns; while the roads were too deep, and the soil too wet, for the action of cavalry. The position was intersected in its centre by the great road to St Jean Pied-de-Port, as that at Waterloo was by the chaussée leading through La Belle Alliance to Charleroi. The heavy rains during the night so swelled the Nive, that Beresford's bridge of boats was swept away; and though it was soon restored next morning, yet during the early and most critical period of the action, Hill's corps was entirely separated from the remainder of the army.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nap. vi.  
392, 393.  
Vict. et  
Conq. xxii.  
297. Pellot,  
85.

A thick mist on the morning of the 13th, enabled Soult to form his columns of attack unperceived by his adversary, and they were extremely formidable. In front, on the great road, came D'Erlon, leading on D'Armagnac's, Abbé's, and Daricau's infantry, with a large body of cavalry, and twenty-two guns; next came Foy's and Maransin's men, and behind the other two divisions in reserve. These huge and dark masses, closely grouped together on the high road and fields immediately adjoining, at one time entirely shrouded in mist, at another dimly descried through openings of the vapour, seemed of portentous magnitude. With dauntless hearts, however, the little army of the British beheld the imposing array, albeit well aware that the bridge of the Nive had been swept away, and that no succour would be obtained till the day was far spent. At half-past eight the sun broke forth; Soult immediately pushed forward his light troops, and drove in the Allied pickets in the centre, which fell back towards St Pierre. Abbé attacked them with great vigour; D'Armagnac, standing off to the left, directed his troops against Vieux Mouguerre and Byng's men; the sparkling line of fire soon crept up the slopes on either side of the basin, and the more distant hills re-echoed with the roar of forty guns, which were worked with extraordinary vigour.<sup>2</sup>

54.  
French order  
of attack.

<sup>2</sup> Nap. vi.  
395. Vict.  
et Conq. xxii.  
297. Pellot,  
85.

Abbé's onset in the centre was pushed with such energy, that Ashworth's Portuguese were soon driven in; and the 71st, which was sent with two guns to their aid, was likewise forced to give ground; but the 50th having advanced to its support, the French in their turn were repulsed. The enemy upon this brought up a strong battery of cannon, which played on the British

55.  
Battle of St  
Pierre, and  
imminent  
danger of the  
British.

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centre with such effect that it was seriously weakened; and Abbé, seeing the impression, pushed forward a deep and massy column, which advanced with great vigour, in spite of a crashing cannonade that tore its front and flanks, drove back the Portuguese and 50th, and won the crest of the hill in the centre. Barnes upon this brought up the 92d Highlanders, who were in reserve behind St Pierre; and that noble corps, charging down the highway, soon cleared away the skirmishers on either side; and, driving home, met the shock of two French regiments which were advancing up the causeway, but which soon wavered, broke, and fled, closely followed by the mountain plumes. Soult immediately advanced his guns on either side, the shot from which plunged through the flanks of the pursuing mass, while fresh regiments were brought up to arrest its advance. Despite all their valour, the Highlanders were unable to resist this accumulation of enemies. The French corps in front advanced steadily forward with admirable resolution, and the 92d were borne back, fighting desperately, but in disorder, to their old ground behind St Pierre. The Portuguese guns upon this drew back to avoid being taken; the French skirmishers every where crowded forward to the front. Barnes fell, badly wounded; the Portuguese gunners, who had resumed their post in the rear, dropped so fast beside their pieces that their fire almost ceased. The 71st were withdrawn from the field, by orders from their colonel, gnashing their teeth with indignation at being taken out of the battle; the 3d, on the right, had yielded to the impetuous attack of D'Armagnac; nothing but the thick hedge in their front prevented Ashworth's Portuguese from being driven from their ground; and already the once dreaded, but long unheard, cries of victory resounded through the French lines.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pringle's  
Memoir, 37,  
39. Nap. vi.  
395, 397.  
Vict. et  
Cong. xxii.  
297, 298.  
Belm. i. 270.

56.  
Hill restores  
the action by  
supporting  
the centre.

Then was seen in its highest lustre what can be effected in war by individual firmness and resolution, and how vital are the duties which, at the decisive moment, devolve on the general-in-chief. No sooner did Hill, who had stationed himself on a mount in the rear, from whence he could survey the whole field of battle, behold the critical position of the centre and right,

and especially the retreat of the 71st and 3d regiments, than he descended from his eminence, and in person led on one brigade of Le Cor's Portuguese infantry to support Barnes's men in the centre, while the other was despatched to aid the right on Vieux Mouguerre against D'Armagnac. Meanwhile the right wing of the 50th, and Ashworth's Caçadores, spread themselves out as skirmishers behind the impenetrable hedge, and still with the most heroic courage made good their post; the 92d in consequence had time to re-form behind St Pierre; and their gallant colonel, Cameron, led them again down the road with colours flying and music playing. At this sight the skirmishers on the flanks again rushed forward; the French tirailleurs were in their turn driven back, and the 92d charged at a rapid pace down the highway, until they met the solid column of French infantry, in all the pride of victory, marching up. For a moment the dense mass stood firm; a shock with crossed bayonets seemed inevitable, when suddenly the enemy wheeled about and retired across the valley to their original position, scarcely pursued by the victors, who were so thoroughly exhausted with their desperate encounter as to be ready to drop down with fatigue. At the same time, the brave 71st, indignant at being withdrawn from the fight, returned to aid the tartan uniforms with such alacrity, and were so gallantly supported by Le Cor's Portuguese, headed by Hill and Stewart, that the enemy on the right centre also were overthrown, though not without heavy loss, including that of Le Cor himself, who fell severely wounded.<sup>1</sup>

While this terrible conflict was going forward in the centre, D'Armagnac, on the British right, with the aid of six pieces of horse artillery, had all but carried the ridge of Vieux Mouguerre, where Byng bravely struggled against vastly superior forces. But just as that division, with Foy's, which also had now come up, had established themselves on the summit, and appeared in threatening masses on the right of the British centre, the brigade of Portuguese, so opportunely detached by Hill, arrived in double-quick time to their support. These admirable troops, ascending the reverse slope of the ridge under a raking fire from the French guns, now established on the

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<sup>1</sup> Pringle's  
Memoir, 39,  
43. Nap. vi.  
397, 398.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 297, 298.

57.  
Progress of  
the battle on  
the two  
wings, where  
the British  
are at length  
victorious.

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<sup>1</sup> Pringle's  
Memoir, 47,  
52. Nap. vi.  
398, 400.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 298, 299.

58.  
The arrival  
of Wellington  
with the  
other divi-  
sions com-  
pletes the  
victory.

<sup>2</sup> Wellington to Lord  
Bathurst,  
14th Dec.  
1813, Gurw.  
xi. 369. Nap.  
vi. 399, 400.  
Vict. et Conq.  
xxii. 299, 300.  
Pellot, 85,  
87.

summit, succeeded in rallying the 3d regiment; and the two united charged again up the hill with the utmost gallantry, and with loud shouts won the top. At the same time, Soult was obliged to withdraw D'Armagnac's reserve to support Abbé in the centre; and Byng, now more feebly opposed, succeeded in re-establishing himself in a solid manner on the Partouhiria range. Meanwhile Daricau, on the British left, maintained a brave and balanced contest on the hills of Villefranque with Pringle's brigade, who stoutly stood their ground; but the repulse of Abbé, in the centre, rendered it impossible for the gallant Frenchman to maintain the advanced position he had attained, and his own losses having been very severe, he was obliged to fall back, like the rest, to his original position on the other side of the basin.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the repulse of the enemy was complete at all points before the other divisions came up from the left bank of the Nive. But at half past twelve the sixth division, which had marched without intermission since daylight, and crossed by the re-established bridge of boats behind Villefranque, appeared, led on by Wellington in person, in imposing strength, on the mount in the rear from which Hill had descended; and it was soon followed by the third and fourth divisions, and some brigades of the seventh, who were seen hurrying forward in great haste from the bridge. At this joyful sight, the wearied British, forgetting their fatigues, resumed the offensive at all points. Buchan's and Byng's brigades, with loud cheers, hurled D'Armagnac's and Foy's divisions down the Partouhiria slope, and the centre rushing impetuously forward, enveloped and carried all the advanced positions still held by the enemy in front of St Pierre, taking two guns, which had galled them excessively from the beginning of the fight. In vain Soult hurried to the front, and, exposing his life like the meanest of his followers, besought his men by the remembrance of their past glories, and the sight of the present dangers of their country, to return to the charge. Nothing could withstand the onward movement of the British; and the French, baffled at all points, recoiled to the ground they had held before the action commenced.<sup>2</sup> The battle now died away, first to a declining interchange of musketry, and then to a distant cannon-



ade; and before night, Soult, despairing of success in any further attacks, withdrew his troops into the intrenched camp, and himself crossed with Foy's division to the right bank of the Adour, to guard against any attempts on the part of the enemy to cross that important river.

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This desperate battle, one of the most bloody and hard fought which had occurred in the whole course of the Peninsular war, cost the British two thousand five hundred, and the French three thousand men. The total loss of the Allies, from the time when the passage of the Nive commenced, was six hundred and fifty killed, three thousand nine hundred and seven wounded, and five hundred and four prisoners, in all five thousand and nineteen; and this included five generals, Hope, Robinson, Barnes, Le Cor, and Ashworth, wounded: a clear proof of the obstinate nature of the conflict, and of the stern necessity which had compelled the chiefs to expose themselves as much as the humblest soldiers. The French lost six thousand men, killed or wounded, on the field, besides two guns, the hard-earned trophies of the fight at St Pierre: including the German troops who came over on the night of the 10th, they were weakened by eight thousand five hundred men. But, what was of still more importance, they had lost the object for which they fought: the Allies had crossed the Nive, and were established in strength on the left bank of the upper Adour; the navigation of that river was intercepted; and Soult, with all the advantage of an intrenched camp and fortress in his rear, with an interior and central line of communication for his troops, had not only been unable to obtain any durable advantage over the portions of the Allied army which he had successively assailed with his whole force; but he had been deprived of his principal line of communication, and disabled, as the event soon proved, from continuing in his defensive position under the cannon of Bayonne.<sup>1</sup>

59.  
Results of  
the battle.

<sup>1</sup> Wellington  
to Lord Bath-  
urst, 14th  
Dec. 1813.  
Gurw. xi.  
371. Belm i.  
270. Pellot,  
89. La Pene,  
72.

The good effects of the ground which Wellington had won with so much toil and bloodshed, soon appeared in the extended cantonments for his troops, and the enlarged comforts of his men. While the French army, cooped up in its intrenched camp, was deprived of all communication on either side by the Adour, and driven for their forage and support upon the vast and desolate *landes* of

60.  
Great advan-  
tages of Wel-  
lington's win-  
ter quarters.

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Bordeaux, traversed only by land carriages, and yielding almost nothing for the support of an army; the British troops, comfortably established in Urogne, St Jean de Luz, and the other towns on the coast, drew ample supplies from the sea on the one side, and the rich fields of Bearn, the birthplace of Henry IV. and the garden of France, on the other. St Jean de Luz was declared a free port, and by a special proclamation protection was afforded to all vessels, even French, which had been or might be found in the Nivelle or the Adour, or in any harbours on the coast of France. By these wise and disinterested measures, joined to the admirable discipline established among his troops, and which he rigorously maintained, and their constant payment for every thing in ready money,\* Wellington indeed deprived himself of much prize-money, which would otherwise have fallen to his lot;† but he secured ample supplies of all sorts for his soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gurw. xi.  
396, 423.

The harbour of St Jean de Luz was speedily crowded with the pendants of all nations, wafting in profusion every thing requisite for the maintenance of his army; while the peasants of Bearn brought their produce more

\* "I do not believe that the union of the two nations depends on pillage; but if it does, I declare for one, that I desire neither the command nor the continuation of such a bond, founded on plunder. I have lost twenty thousand men in this campaign; and I have not done so in order that either General Murillo, or any other general, should come here to pillage the French peasants; and as long as I command I will not permit it. If you are resolved to pillage, look out for another commander than me; for as long as I am at your head, I declare aloud I will not permit it. You have large armies in Spain; if you desire to plunder, take away the command from me. Enter France, and I will withdraw into Spain; you know well you would be driven out in fifteen days, having neither magazines, money, nor any thing requisite to carry on a campaign. France, rich as it is, would never maintain your troops if it is given up to plunder: even those who go on the principle of levying contributions to make war maintain war, are well aware that the first thing to do is to stop private disorders. I am the best friend of the soldiers and their real interests, when I prevent them from destroying both by pillage. I could also say something in justification of my conduct in political considerations; but I have said enough, and I repeat it. I am altogether indifferent whether I command a large or a small army; but, be it large or small, it must obey me, and there must be no pillage."—WELLINGTON to GENERAL MURILLO, 24th Dec. 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 396.

† "The proclamation which I issued, declaring that private property should be respected on entering France, has been applied by their owners to the vessels taken in the Nivelle and the Adour; and though I had not such an application in my contemplation when I issued it, yet, as far as I am concerned, who in personal interest may be considered a principal party, I am desirous for the general good that it should be so applied, and that the owners of these vessels should retain their property. If the law-officers of the crown construe the proclamation otherwise, as applying only to property ashore, I request the authority of his Royal Highness the Prince-Regent to issue another proclamation, to protect the vessels found in the rivers and ports of France belonging to persons remaining in their houses, as described in my proclamation of November last."—WELLINGTON to EARL BATHURST, 8th Jan.; GURWOOD, xi. 423, 424

regularly to the British market than they had ever done to that of Bayonne. This admirable conduct indeed caused a severe drain upon the British finances, especially as all the payments required to be made in specie; it threw the army in consequence seven months into arrear, and accumulated debt to an immense amount in every part of the Peninsula. But Wellington and the government had the firmness to adhere to it with scrupulous fidelity under every difficulty, and their constancy was not without its reward. It entirely stopped the growth of a national war in the south of France, which the pillage of the Spaniards at one period was beginning to excite; it sent the conscripts home by thousands from the tricolor standards; and by the striking contrast which it afforded to the ruinous requisitions of Napoleon, contributed to rouse that general indignation at his government, which so soon after hurled him from the throne.<sup>1</sup>

The battles in front of Bayonne afford one of the most remarkable examples which the whole annals of war have preserved, of the importance of an interior line of communication, and the prodigious effect which the skilful use of that advantage can produce in the hands of an able general. Like Napoleon around Mantua in 1796, in Dresden in 1813, or in the plains of Champagne in 1814, Soult contrived by means of this circumstance, with an army inferior upon the whole to that of his adversary, to be always superior at the point of attack; and such was the weight of the columns which he thus hurled in succession at different parts of the British force, that he more than once all but gained a decisive advantage, and nearly reft from Wellington the fruits of his whole conquests beyond the Spanish frontiers. This close approximation to success, also, was attained with troops disheartened by long-continued defeat, against an enemy flushed with an unparalleled series of victories, and against a commander who never was outdone in the sagacity with which he divined the intentions of his opponent, and the rapidity with which he moved his forces to counteract them. On the other hand, the ultimate defeat of all these efforts, though planned with the utmost ability, and executed with surpassing gallantry,

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61.  
And beneficial effects of Wellington's stoppage of plunder.

<sup>1</sup> Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Jan. 8, 1814. Gurw. xi. 423, 425.

62.

Reflections on the battles in front of Bayonne.

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by a comparatively small body of the Allied troops, proves, what so many other events in the war conspire to demonstrate, that a certain degree of firmness in the generals, and courage in the soldiers, who are thus assailed by the powers of strategy, will often counterbalance all their advantages: and that it is to the want of these qualities among his opponents, as much as his own genius, that the triumphs of Napoleon in Italy and Champagne are to be ascribed.

63.  
Reflections  
on Soult's  
conduct in  
the cam-  
paign.

Soult's conduct in the campaign, from the time that he assumed the command in the middle of July, was a model, so far as the general direction of its movements is concerned, of vigour and ability; and probably no other commander in the French army, excepting the Emperor, could, with the same means, have made a resistance equally obstinate and protracted. When it is recollected, that when he took the command of the army in the middle of July at Bayonne, he found it routed and disorganised, and in such a state of depression as to be almost unequal to any active operations; and that in the end of December he was still under the walls of the same fortress, after having, in the intervening period, fought seven pitched battles, and sustained a loss of thirty thousand men, it must be admitted that a more glorious example of tenacious resolution and patriotic resistance is not to be met with in the long and glorious annals of military exploits. His immediate resumption of the offensive, and advance towards Pampeluna, is one of the happiest instances that ever occurred of a defensive, maintained by a vigorous offensive warfare; and though defeated both then and in the subsequent engagements on the frontier, by the admirable promptitude and moral courage of his antagonist, yet, in prolonging the contest for such a considerable period, he evinced resources of no ordinary kind. In the execution of his admirable projects, however, in the actual shock of battle, he did not by any means display the same capacity; and if he had evinced as much vigour at Soraoren on the 26th July, at Bassussary on the 10th, or St Pierre on the 13th December, as he showed ability in the previous conception of the movements which led to these battles, the result might have been

different, and the British arms been rolled back with defeat behind the Ebro.

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Divided as the Spanish and English writers will ever be on the share which their respective countrymen had in its triumphs, there is one glory connected with the Peninsular war, which the British empire shares with no other power, and which the biographer of Wellington is entitled to claim as exclusively his own. During all the difficulties of the contest, and in the midst of the almost overwhelming embarrassments which arose from the long continuance and oppressive burdens of the war, England never adopted the odious revolutionary principle, of drawing the resources for the contest from the country in which it was carried on ; and from first to last firmly, to her own great immediate loss, repudiated the maxim that war should maintain war. Whatever she did, she did with her own forces and from her own means alone. No ravaged country had to rue the day when her standards appeared upon it ; no wasted realm showed where her armies had been ; no tears of the fatherless and the widow, mourning cold-blooded massacres, dimmed the lustre of her victories. If disorders occurred, as occur they did, and occur they will, it was against her system of warfare, and despite the utmost efforts of her officers and her chief. With unconquerable constancy, Wellington and the British government adhered to this noble system, in the midst of pecuniary difficulties which would have crushed any other man, and financial embarrassments which would have overwhelmed any other nation. During all this time, Napoleon's generals and armies were revelling in wealth and affluence, and France itself was enjoying comparatively light taxation, the fruit of the unbounded and systematic extortion which they had long practised in all the countries occupied by their armies. But mark the end of these things, and the final opposite effect of the gains of oppression and the rule of justice upon the fortunes of nations. Napoleon, driven with disgrace behind the Rhine and the Pyrenees, was unable to protect even the mighty empire he ruled from the aroused and universal indignation of mankind ; while Wellington, commencing from small beginnings, at length

64.  
Peculiar  
moral lustre  
with which  
England was  
encircled  
from the  
contest.

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burst, with an overwhelming force, through the mountain barrier of the south, liberated the whole Peninsula from the oppressor's yoke, and planted his victorious standards, amidst the blessings of a protected and grateful people, on the plains of France.

# APPENDIX.

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

Note A, page 98.

*Total French Army in Germany at the Resumption of Hostilities, on 15th August 1813.*

*Imperial Guard, Infantry.—Marshal Mortier.*

*Divisions.—Old Guard.*

	Bats.	Squads.	Infan.	Cav.
Friant, grenadiers, - - -	4 }		6,000	
Curial, chasseurs, - - -	4 }			

*Young Guard.*

Dumoustier, - - -	8 }		22,400	
Barrois, - - -	8 }			
Boyeldieu, - - -	8 }			
Roguet, - - -	8 }			

*Cavalry.—General NANSOUTY.*

Guyot, grenadiers, - - -	6 }		5,000	
Ornano, dragoons, - - -	6 }			
Lefebvre Desnouettes, chasseurs, - - -	6 }			
Krazinski, lancers, - - -	6 }			
Guards of Honour, - - -	10 }			

*1st Corps.—General VANDAMME at Zittau.*

1 Dumonceau, - - -	8 }		13,000	
12 Philippon, - - -	8 }			
23 Dufour, - - -	8 }			
Brigade Corbineau, - - -		8		1,000

*2d Corps.—VICTOR at Zittau.*

4 Teste, - - -	8 }		22,400	
5 Corbineau, - - -	8 }			
6 Mouton Duverney, - - -	8 }			
6 Bis, - - -	8 }			
Carry forward,	96	42	63,800	6,000

	Brought forward,	Bats.	Squads.	Infan.	Cav.
		96	42	63,800	6,000
3d Corps.—NEY at Leignitz.					
8 Souham, - - - -	- - - -	15	}	33,800	
9 Delmas, - - - -	- - - -	13			
10 Albert, - - - -	- - - -	13			
11 Ricard, - - - -	- - - -	13			
A Brigade, - - - -	- - - -		10		1,300
4th Corps.—General BERTRAND at Sprottau.					
12 Morand, - - - -	- - - -	8	}	20,000	
15 Fontanelli, (Italians,) - -	- - - -	12			
18 Franquemont, Württembergers, -	- - - -	8			
5th Corps.—General LAURISTON at Goldberg.					
16 Maison, - - - -	- - - -	12	}	23,800	
17 Puthod, - - - -	- - - -	10			
19 Rochambeau, - - - -	- - - -	12			
6th Corps.—MARMONT at Buntzlau.					
20 Compans, - - - -	- - - -	10	}	18,200	
21 Bonnet, - - - -	- - - -	8			
22 Friedrich, - - - -	- - - -	8			
7th Corps.—General REYNIER at Görlitz.					
32 Dunette, - - - -	- - - -	10	}	24,000	
37 Lecocq, (Saxons,) - - - -	- - - -	8			
38 Sahrer, (ib.) - - - -	- - - -	8			
39 Marchant, (Hessians,) - - - -	- - - -	10			
8th Corps, (Poles.)—PONIATOWSKI at Zittau.					
25 Dombrowsky, - - - -	- - - -	8	}	12,000	
27 Rosnietzky, - - - -	- - - -	8			
A brigade, - - - -	- - - -		6		800
11th Corps.—MACDONALD at Lowenberg.					
31 Gerard, - - - -	- - - -	10	}	18,200	
35 Fressinet, - - - -	- - - -	8			
36 Charpentier, - - - -	- - - -	8			
A brigade, - - - -	- - - -		8		1,000
12th Corps.—OUDINOT at Dahme.					
13 Gruyer, - - - -	- - - -	10	}	21,000	
14 Guilleminot, - - - -	- - - -	14			
Raglowich, (Bavarians,) - - - -	- - - -	6			
A Brigade - - - -	- - - -		6		800
14th Corps.—ST CYR at Pirna.					
43 Claparede, - - - -	- - - -	9	}	13,500	
44 - - - -	- - - -	3			
45 Rayout, - - - -	- - - -	9			
Reserve of Cavalry.—THE KING OF NAPLES.					
1st Corps.—LATOUR MAUBOURG at Görlitz.					
Light cavalry, Andenarde, - - -	- - - -		24	}	12,000
Do. Castex, - - - -	- - - -		30		
Cuirassiers, Doumerc, - - - -	- - - -		18		
Do. St Germain, - - - -	- - - -		24		
Carry forward, - - - -	- - - -	367	168	248,300	21,900



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Brought forward,      Bats.    Squads.    Infan.      Cav.  
 2d Corps.—SEBASTIANI at Leignitz.      367      168      248,300      21,900

Light cavalry, Excelmans,	-	-	28	}	8,300
Do. Defrance,	-	-	21		
Cuirassiers, Bordesoult,	-	-	18		

3d Corps.—ARRIGHI at Leipsic.

Chasseurs, Jacquinet,	-	-	24	}	6,000
Do. Fournier,	-	-	24		
Dragoons, Lorge,	-	-	30		
Do. - - - - -	-	-	33		

4th Corps.—KELLERMAN at Zittau.

Sokolnitzki, (Poles,)	-	-	15	}	6,000
Ulimski,	-	-	14		
Sulkonzky,	-	-	16		

Total of the Grand Army,	-	367	391	248,300	42,200
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## Detached Divisions.

13th Corps.—DAVOUST at Hamburg.

3d Loison,	-	-	-	8	}	18,000
40th Pecheux,	-	-	-	8		
41st Thiebault,	-	-	-	8		
A Brigade,	-	-	-	-	8	1,200

AUGEREAU at Würzburg, Bamberg, and Baireuth.

42d,	-	-	-	9	}	21,000
51st,	-	-	-	8		
52d,	-	-	-	13		

5th Corps of Cavalry, MILHAUD.

Light Cavalry, Piri,	-	-	-	12	}	3,000
Dragoons, Berkheim,	-	-	-	16		
1b. L'Heritier,	-	-	-	18		
Danes under Davoust,	-	-	-	-	15,000	900
Bavarian Army of Observation on the Inn,	-	-	-	-	22,200	1,800
Total, detached,	-	54	54	76,200	6,900	

## Summary.

Total of the French Grand Army,	367	391	248,300	42,200
Total of the detached divisions of French army in Germany,	54	54	76,200	6,900
Grand Total of French in Germany,	421	445	324,500	49,100

—VAUDONCOURT, vol. i. p. 128.

PRINCE EUGENE's army in Italy, viz :—

	Battalions.	Guns.	Men.
1st Division, Quesnel,	-	12	18
2d Division, Gratien,	-	-	16
3d Division, Verdier,	-	-	18
4th Division, Marcognet,	-	11	20
5th Division, Palombini,	-	12	16
6th Division, Lecchi,	-	12	16

RESERVE.			
Three Battalions,	-	-	2,469
CAVALRY.			
Twelve Squadrons, Mermet,	-	-	1,800
CANNON.			
Reserve, 12 guns, 6 bombs,	}	18	
Great park, 6 guns, 5 bombs,		11	
Total,	-	69	133
			52,374

—*Victoires et Conquêtes*, xxii. p. 192.

*French Blockaded Forces.*

The Garrison of Dantzic,	-	-	-	-	-	20,000
Garrison of Zamosc,	-	-	-	-	-	4,000
Garrison of Modlin,	-	-	-	-	-	3,000
Garrison of Stettin,	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
Garrison of Cüstrin,	-	-	-	-	-	5,000
Garrison of Glogau,	-	-	-	-	-	6,000
Garrison of Torgau,	-	-	-	-	-	8,000
Garrison of Wittenberg,	-	-	-	-	-	5,000
Garrison of Magdeburg,	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
Garrison of Würzburg,	-	-	-	-	-	1,500
Garrison of Dresden,	-	-	-	-	-	5,000
Garrison of Freyburg,	-	-	-	-	-	800
Garrison of Erfurth,	-	-	-	-	-	2,000
Total,	-	-	-	-	-	80,300

—*Plötho*, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 90.

*Summary of French Forces in Germany and Italy.*

	Infantry.	Cavalry.
In the field,	260,000	42,200
Detached,	39,000	4,200
Prince Eugene's army in Italy,	50,574	1,800
Blockaded Garrisons,	80,300	
Danes,	15,000	900
Bavarian Army of Observation,	22,200	1,800
Total,	467,074	50,900
Grand Total,	517,974	

*Allied Forces in Germany and Italy at Resumption of Hostilities on  
15th August 1813*

ALLIED FORCE.

	Men.	Cannon.
The Grand Army of Bohemia under Prince Schwarzenberg,	237,770	698
The Army of Silesia under Blücher,	93,322	356
The Army of the North under the Crown- Prince,	154,012	387
The Russian Reserve under Benningsen,	57,329	398
The Corps d'Armée of the Prince of Reuss,	26,750	42
The Austrian Army of Reserve,	50,000	120
Total in the Field,	619,183	1,801

## BLOCKADING FORCES.

Before Dantzic,	-	-	-	-	-	35,000
Before Zamosc,	-	-	-	-	-	14,700
Before Glogau,	-	-	-	-	-	29,450
Before Cüstrin,	-	-	-	-	-	8,450
Before Stettin,	-	-	-	-	-	14,600
Total Blockading Force,						102,200
Total in the Field,						619,183
Grand Total,						721,383

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 72.

The composition of this immense force was as follows:—

## I. AUSTRIANS.

The Grand Army of Bohemia under Prince Schwartzenberg,	130,000
Army under the Prince of Reuss on the Inn, - - -	24,750
Army of Italy under Field-marshal Hiller, - - -	50,000
Army of Reserve under the Archduke Ferdinand, and the Prince of Württemberg, - - -	60,000
Total of Austrians,	264,750

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, 26.

## II. RUSSIANS.

*Russian Troops in the Grand Army of Bohemia.*

	Battal.	Squadrons	Batteries.	Cossack Regts.	Men.
1. Corps of Wittgenstein,	39	36	7	4	22,400
2. Guards under the Grand-duke Constantine,	46	72	21½	20	36,020
Total,	85	108	28½	24	58,420

*Russian Troops in the Silesian Army.*

1. Corps of Langeron,	46	49	11	7	27,600
2. Corps of Sacken,	24	20	5	8	15,000
3. Corps of St Priest,	21	4	3	0	9,400
Total,	91	73	19	15	52,000

*Russian Troops in the Army of the North.*

1. Corps of Winzingerode,	11	8	3	8	8,826
2. Corps of Woronzoff,	7	15	4	8	8,667
3. Corps of Walmoden,	11	12	1	18	8,056
Total,	29	35	8	34	25,549
The Russian Army of Reserve under Benningsen,	75	68	15	8	57,329
Total in the Field,	270	284	99½	81	193,298

Infantry,	-	-	-	-	-	121,092
Cavalry,	-	-	-	-	-	31,272
Artillery,	-	-	-	-	-	14,691
Cossacks,	-	-	-	-	-	26,243

Total Men, 193,298  
Cannon, 834

*Army of Reserve under Benningsen.*

	Bat.	Squad.	Guns.	Men.
1. Corps of Markoff,	14	70	38	16,467
2. Corps of Doctoroff,	29	25	120	26,571
3. Corps of Osterman Tolstoy,	30	27	40	17,045
Total,	73	122	198	60,083

*Effective in the Field.*

Infantry,	-	40,449
Cavalry and Cossacks,	-	12,886
Artillery and Pioneers,	-	3,944

Total Men, 57,477  
Cannon, 198

—PLOTNO, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 8.

*Army of the Prince of Reuss on the Inn.*

	Men.
Infantry,	16,450
Cavalry,	7,250
Artillery	1,050

Total, 24,750

*Corps in Italy under Hiller.* 50,000

—PLOTNO, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 70.

*Blockading Forces.*

	Men.
Corps at Dantzig,	29,100
at Zamosc,	10,300
at Glogau,	12,600
at Modlin,	4,000
Total,	56,000

*Total Russian force in Germany.*

In the Field,	-	-	-	-	193,298
Blockading Force,	-	-	-	-	56,000

Grand Total of Russians, 249,298

—PLOTNO, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 32.

## III. PRUSSIANS.

	Battalions of the line.	Battalions of Landwehr.	Jager Companies.	Squadrons of the line.	Squadrons of Landwehr.	Batteries.
Royal Guard,	6	—	2	8	—	2
1st Corps,	20	24	4	28	16	13
2d Corps,	24	16	4	28	14	16
3d Corps,	28	12	2	29	16	10
4th Corps,	11	69	—	—	58	11
Corps of Walmoden,	5	—	—	5	—	—
Blockading force before Glogau,	—	—	—	—	4	—
Blockading force before Dantzig,	—	—	—	—	6	1
Total,	94	121	12	98	114	53

Infantry of the Line,	-	-	-	72,200
Landwehr Infantry,	-	-	-	112,000
Jager Infantry,	-	-	-	2,400
Pioneers,	-	-	-	700
Cavalry of the Line,	-	-	-	14,700
Landwehr Cavalry,	-	-	-	17,400
Artillery,	-	-	-	8,100
Total,				227,500

*Summary.*

Infantry,	-	-	-	187,300
Cavalry,	-	-	-	32,100
Artillery,	-	-	-	8,100

Grand Total of Prussians, - 227,500

—PLOTTO, vol. ii. App. 23.

## IV. SWEDES AND ENGLISH TROOPS FROM THE NORTH OF GERMANY.

	Battal.	Squad.	Batteries.	Gunners.	Cos. Reg.	Men.
Swedes, -	35	32	9	62		24,018
English, -	4	6		6		3,000
Swedes and English,						27,018

*Composition and Strength of the different Armies employed.*

## ARMY OF SILESIA.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Cossacks.
Corps of York, -	29,783	6,033	1,917	
Corps of Sacken, -	9,600	2,000	1,000	3,600
Corps of Langeron, -	18,464	2,800	2,600	4,400
Corps of St Priest, -	8,400	2,920	600	1,200
Total, -	66,247	13,753	6,117	9,200

—PLOTTO, vol. ii. App. 51.

Infantry,	-	-	-	66,247
Cavalry,	-	-	-	13,753
Artillery,	-	-	-	6,117
Cossacks,	-	-	-	9,200
Grand Total,				95,317
Cannon,	-	-	-	536

## ARMY OF THE NORTH.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Cossacks.
Swedish Army, -	18,573	3,742	1,703	
Corps of Winzingerode, -	5,465	834	583	2,214
Corps of Woronzoff, -	4,262	2,910	883	4,197
Corps of Walmoden, -	19,635	3,850	561	1,350
Corps of Bulow, -	32,000	6,350	1,800	1,200
Corps of Tauenzeln, -	33,000	5,200	700	
Total, -	112,935	22,886	6,230	8,961

Infantry,	-	-	-	-	-	112,935
Cavalry,	-	-	-	-	-	22,886
Artillery,	-	-	-	-	-	6,230
Cossacks,	-	-	-	-	-	8,961
English Troops,	-	-	-	-	-	3,000

Grand Total, - 154,012

—PLOTTO, vol. ii. App. 62.

#### GRAND ARMY OF BOHEMIA.

		Battal.	Squadrons.	Batteries.	Cossack Reg.	Men.
Austrians,	-	112	124	45		130,850
Russians,—	-					
Wittgenstein,	-	39	36	5	4	} 58,420
Reserve and Guard,	-	46½	72	21½	21	
Prussians,—	-					
Kleist,	-	41	44	14		} 48,500
Guards,	-	6½	8	2		
Total,	-	245	284	87½	25	237,770

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Cossacks.
Austrians,	99,300	24,800	6,750	
Russians,	34,600	10,900	5,750	7,170
Prussians,	38,300	7,800	2,400	
Total,	172,200	43,500	14,900	7,170

Infantry,	-	-	-	172,200
Cavalry,	-	-	-	43,500
Artillery,	-	-	-	14,900
Cossacks,	-	-	-	7,170

Grand Total—Men, 237,770  
Cannon, 698

—PLOTTO, vol. ii. App. 44.

## CHAPTER LXXX.

Note A, p. 215.

Number of different persons who were quartered in Dresden and its suburbs during the periods undermentioned, viz. :—

	New Town.	Old Town.	Suburbs.	Friedrichstadt.	Total.
From 26th Feb. to 25th Mar. 1813.	117,338	67,250	43,832	8,385	236,805
From 26th Mar. to 7th May,	208,600	95,862	49,128	21,137	374,727
From 8th May to 14th June,	499,146	274,709	273,832	90,513	1,088,293
From 15th June to 15th November,	1,635,275	1,270,457	1,523,595	633,344	5,062,871
From 16th Nov. to 31st December,	280,375	162,646	110,068	61,160	614,249
From 1st Jan. to 31st Dec. 1814,	1,346,971	463,465	724,735	177,174	2,712,345
	4,087,705	2,334,389	2,725,190	991,713	10,089,290

—ODELEBEN, *Campagne de 1813 en Saxe*, vol. ii. p. 287.

Note B, p. 215.

Three different approximative statements of the force of the French army received at the head-quarters of the Allies :—

*Assembled in front of Dresden, and opposed to the great Allied Army.*

	Aug. 13th.	Sept. 20th.	Sept. 24th.
Old Guard, - - -	6,607	4,000	25,000
Young Guard, - - -	32,000	24,000	} 3,000
Cavalry of the Guard, - - -	10,500	6,000	
Vandamme, - - -	25,000	4,000	6,000
Victor, - - -	21,000	18,000	14,000
Marmont, - - -	30,000	20,000	18,000
Poniatowski, - - -	15,000	10,000	11,000
St Cyr, - - -	31,000	20,000	20,000
Latur Maubourg's Cavalry, -	10,000	6,000	7,000
Total,	181,107	112,000	104,000

*Opposed to the Northern Army under the Crown-Prince of Sweden.*

	Aug. 13.	Sept. 20.	Sept. 24.
Bertrand, - - -	21,000	14,000	15,000
Reynier, - - -	20,000	8,000	6,000
Oudinot, - - -	24,000	10,000	18,000
Arrighi and Kellerman, (Cavalry,) }	10,000	7,000	6,000
Total,	75,000	39,000	45,000

*Opposed to Blucher in Silesia.*

	Aug. 13.	Sept. 20.	Sept. 24.
Souham, - - -	32,000	22,000	18,000
Lauriston, - - -	35,000	10,000	3,000
Macdonald, - - -	21,000	14,000	12,000
Sebastiani and Milhaud, (Cavalry,) }	13,000	3,000	5,000
Total on the right,	101,000	49,000	38,000
Total on the left,	75,000	39,000	45,000
Total at Dresden,	181,107	112,000	104,000
Grand Total,	357,107	200,000	187,000

—BURGHESSE'S *War in Germany in 1813*, p. 316.

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

Note A, page 224.

Holograph notes of Napoleon on plans of the campaign at Dresden.

*First Note.—Position of the Enemy.*

"It appears certain that the enemy's army of Silesia will move on Wittenberg, and that the grand army of Töplitz will make a movement to its left.

"The enemy's army of Silesia cannot be considered less than sixty thousand men, with the corps of York, Blücher, and Langeron.

"The army of Berlin, composed of a Swedish corps, a Russian corps, and the corps of Bulow and of Tauenzien, can hardly be less.

"There will thus be upon the Lower Elbe an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men; it is doubtful whether it has not detached a body towards Hamburg.

"The army of Töplitz—composed of Austrians, a Prussian corps, and a Russian corps—cannot be considered less than a hundred and twenty thousand men. The project of the Allies, then, will be to march two large armies, one by the right, the other by the left, and to oblige the Emperor to quit Dresden."

*Second Note.—Position of the French Army.*

"The fourth and seventh corps, under the orders of the Prince of Moskwa, are on the Lower Elbe.

"The Duke of Ragusa, with the first corps of cavalry and the third of infantry, at Eilenburg and Torgau. These two armies form, together, a force of eighty thousand men, covering the left.

"The first, the fourteenth, the second, the fifth, and the eighth, form a force of seventy thousand men, covering the right.

"Lastly, the eleventh, the Guard, and the second corps of cavalry, forming a force of sixty thousand men, are in the centre."

*Third Note.—What should be done.*

"It will be ascertained this evening if all the army of Silesia, or only a part of it, has marched on Wittenberg.

"On the one or the other hypothesis, we may resume the offensive by the right bank, and move upon Torgau with the Guard and the eleventh corps; there join the second and third; and thus, with an army of a hundred thousand men, debouch from Torgau by the right bank, on the bridges of the enemy.

"All the corps which cover the right will retire before the enemy upon Dresden, as soon as they shall have perceived the movement, and, if necessary, give up Dresden to move upon Torgau."

*Another Project.*

"This project will consist in moving all the forces on Leipsic, and entirely giving up Dresden.

"For that object, the eleventh, the Guards, and the second corps of cavalry, will set out for Würtschzen; the third and fifth will move upon Coblenz; the first and the fourteenth will move upon Dresden.

"Having thus sacrificed the magazines, the fortifications, and the hospitals, we will try to beat the right wing of the enemy; and if we succeed, we will return to Dresden.

"If we do not succeed in beating the right wing of the enemy in consequence of their getting out of our reach, we will evidently be obliged to take the line of the Saale."



*Third Project.*

“Fortify the left wing of the eleventh corps, and await the course of events in that position.

“*Dresden, 5th October 1813.*”

*Other Notes on the Situation of the Army.*

“It is impossible to enter winter quarters at Dresden without a battle. There are two plans to follow.

“The one, to watch Dresden, and to seek an engagement; afterwards, to return there, and to find all things in the same position, if we conquer.

“The other, to leave Dresden entirely; endeavour to give battle; and, if we gain it, to return to Dresden, beating the Austrian army in Bohemia. We will then arrive only accidentally at Dresden; because, even after we have gained the battle, there is no Elbe during the winter, and it is hardly possible to carry on offensive operations; and then Dresden cannot be the centre of operations. It would much more naturally be at Leipsic, or at Magdeburg.”

*Movements on the first Plan.*

“If we wish to preserve Dresden, it will be necessary to act in the following manner:—

“To intrust the guard of Dresden to the first and fifteenth corps.

“To leave the second, the fifth, and the eighth in observation at Chemnitz and Freiberg, and to give battle with the sixth, the third, the fourth, the seventh, the eleventh, and the Guard.”

*Movements on the second Plan.*

“It will be necessary to post, the day after to-morrow, the second, the fifth, and the eighth corps, the last at Altenburg, and not move on Dresden, holding Chemnitz, but as if they came from Leipsic; to march the first and the fourteenth on Dresden, to follow up the movement; or perhaps to bring up the first and the fourteenth, and to place them in like manner on the road from Nossen, near the heights of Waldheim, having their rear at Leipsic.”

*Difference of the two Plans.*

“In the first plan, being obliged to leave the second and the fifth corps, the rear, at Dresden, they may be reached by the enemy, who may move on Altenburg, and from thence may advance so quickly on Leipsic, that that town will find itself exposed; and the troops which will be left at Dresden can, by the slightest fault, be compromised; and, in place of evacuating Dresden, be driven from it.

“In the second plan, they may form in the end two armies, which may be placed in the natural order in which they happen to be, preserving the central position, to march either to the right or left.

“The Emperor having gone from Dresden, the first and fourteenth corps, the second and fifteenth, may not understand their position, and be unable to combine their operations, and may find themselves cut off.

“In the first plan, I have left the corps to guard Dresden; it is then necessary that his majesty should undertake that business, and that he should remain either in Dresden or the environs. In that case they lose many opportunities on the left; it is even doubtful whether, his majesty not being present in person, it would be advantageous to give battle. If we chance to lose it, the position will become such, that we shall be compelled to retire from the Elbe to the Saale.”—NORVINS, *Portefeuille de 1813*, ii. p. 570.

Note B, page 238.

*French Army at Leipsic.**Right Wing.*—Under the command of the KING OF NAPLES

8th Corps, Prince Poniatowski, - - - -	Infantry.	Cavalry.
2d Corps, Victor, - - - -	8,000	
4th Corps of Cavalry, Kellerman, - - - -	16,000	3,000

*Centre.*

Corps of - - - -	10,000	
5th Corps, General Lauriston, - - - -	9,000	
11th Corps, Macdonald, - - - -	15,000	
1st Corps of Cavalry, General Latour Maubourg, - - - -		4,500
2d Corps of Cavalry, General Sebastiani, - - - -		4,500
5th Corps of Cavalry, General Milhaud, - - - -		3,000

*Left Wing.*—Under the command of NEY.

6th Corps, Marmont, - - - -	18,000	
3d Corps, General Souham, - - - -	15,000	
7th Corps, General Reynier, - - - -	8,000	
3d Corps of Cavalry, Arrighi, - - - -		3,000
Total, - - - -	99,000	18,000

*Behind Leipsic.*

4th Corps, General Bertrand, - - - -	15,000
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*Reserve.*

Old Guard, Mortier, - - - -	4,000	
Young Guard, Oudinot, - - - -	26,000	
Cavalry of the Guard, General Nansouty, - - - -		4,800
Grand Total, - - - -	144,000	22,800
	166,800	

*Not included.*

The first and fourteenth Corps, at Dresden.

The thirteenth Corps, at Hamburg.

—VAUDONCOURT, *Campagne de 1813*, p. 201.

N.B.—Plötho, Kausler, and the German writers, make the French forces 140,000 infantry and 35,000 cavalry; or, in all, 175,000, which is probably near the truth.—KAUSLER, 932.

*Allied Army at Leipsic.*

Austrians under Schwartzberg:

Hesse-Homburg, - - - -	Men.	
Meerfeldt, - - - -	20,000	
Klenau, - - - -	20,000	
	15,000	
Total, - - - -		55,000

Russians:

Wittgenstein, - - - -	20,000	
Barclay de Tolly, - - - -	35,000	
Total, - - - -		55,000

Prussians :						
Kleist,	-	-	-	-	-	20,000
Ziethen,	-	-	-	-	-	5,000
Platoff,	-	-	-	-	-	5,000
Total,						30,000
Army of Blucher :						
Langeron,	-	-	-	-	-	30,000
York,	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
Sacken,	-	-	-	-	-	15,000
Total,						70,000
Corps of Giulay,	-	-	-	-	-	20,000
Total in the field on the first day,						230,000

*Number of the Allies who fought on the 18th.*

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Men.	Guns.
Army of Bohemia, Schwartzberg,	128,850	29,550	158,400	626
Army of Reserve, Benningsen,	23,000	5,000	28,000	132
Army of Silesia, Blucher,	46,000	10,600	56,600	356
Army of the North, Prince-Royal of Sweden,	36,450	11,000	47,450	270
Grand Total,	234,300	56,150	290,450	1,384

—KAUSLER, p. 931.

## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

Note A, page 330.

No. I.—Extracted from the official state of the Allied army, commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir John Murray, at the Col di Balaguer, 17th June 1813, exclusive of officers, sergeants, and drummers :—

	Present fit for duty.	Sick.	Com-mand.	Horses.	Mules.	Total Men.
British and German cavalry,	739	12	6	733	—	757
British, Portuguese, and Sicilian Artillery,	783	8	197	362	604	990
British Engineers and Staff Corps,	78	5	36	—	—	119
British and German Infantry,	7,226	830	637	—	—	8,693
Whittingham's Infantry,	4,370	503	316	—	—	5,189
Sicilian Infantry,	935	121	272	—	—	1,378
Grand Total,	14,181	1,479	1,466	1,095	604	17,126

No. II.—Extract from the original weekly state of the Anglo-Sicilian force commanded by Sir William Clinton. Headquarters, Tarragona, 25th September 1813, exclusive of officers, sergeants, and drummers.

	Present fit for duty.	Sick.	Com-mand.	Horses.	Mules.	Total Men.
Cavalry,	663	61	215	875	40	939
Artillery, Engineers, and Staff Corps,	997	67	58	507	896	1,122
Infantry,	9,124	1,390	1,019	115	429	11,533
Grand Total,	10,784	1,518	1,292	1,497	1,365	13,594

—NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, vol. vi. p. 704.

Note B, page 342.

*Anglo-Portuguese Force, extracted from the original Morning State, 15th October 1813.*

	Officers, Sergeants, Etc.	Rank and File.	Total.
British and German Cavalry and } Infantry, - - -	5,859	37,250	43,109
Portuguese ditto, - - -	4,253	21,274	25,527
Total sabres and bayonets, exclu- } sive of sick and absent on com- mand, - - -	10,112	58,524	68,636
Artillerymen and drivers,			4,000
Grand Total,		- -	72,636

*Anglo-Portuguese Force, from the original Morning State, 16th October 1813.*

	Officers, Sergeants, Etc.	Rank and File.	Total.
British and German Cavalry and } Infantry, - - -	5,356	39,687	45,043
Portuguese ditto, - - -	2,990	22,237	25,227
Total sabres and bayonets, exclu- } sive of sick and absent on com- mand, - - -	8,346	61,924	70,270
Artillerymen and Drivers,			4,000
Grand Total,		- -	74,270

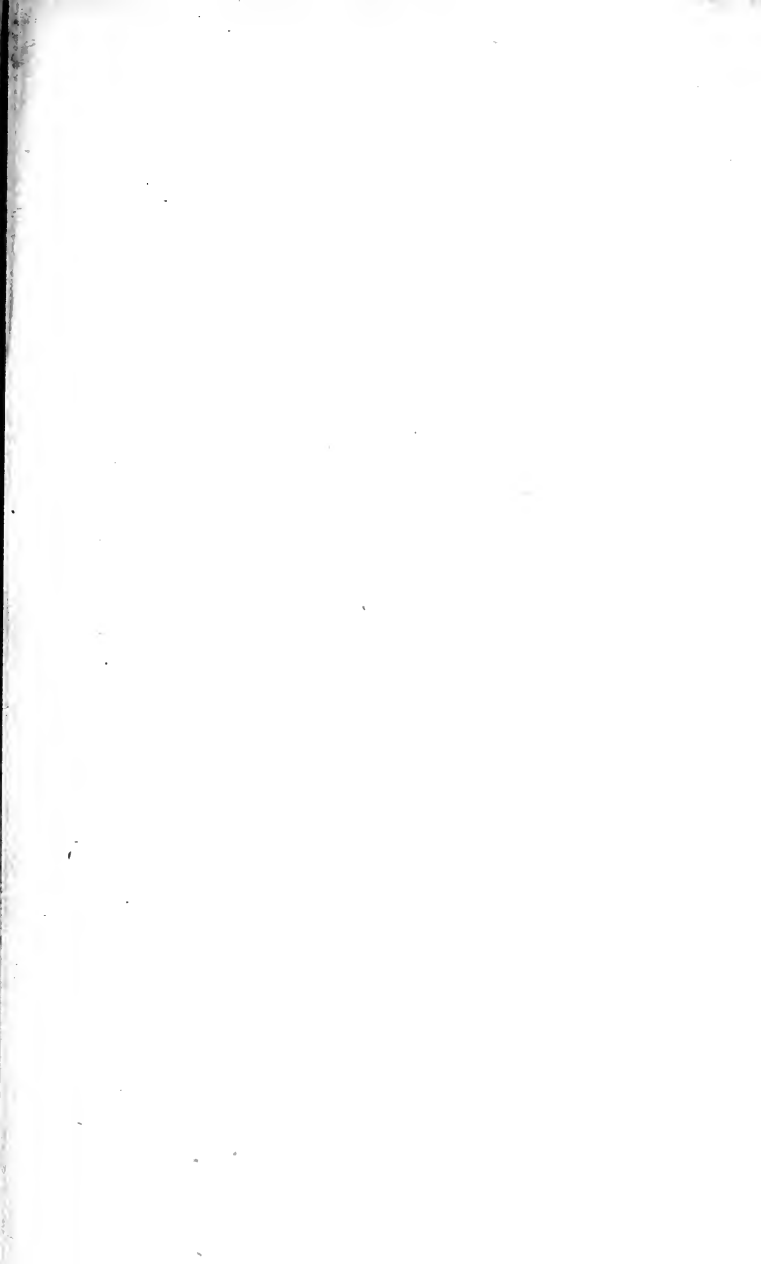
Note C. page 372.

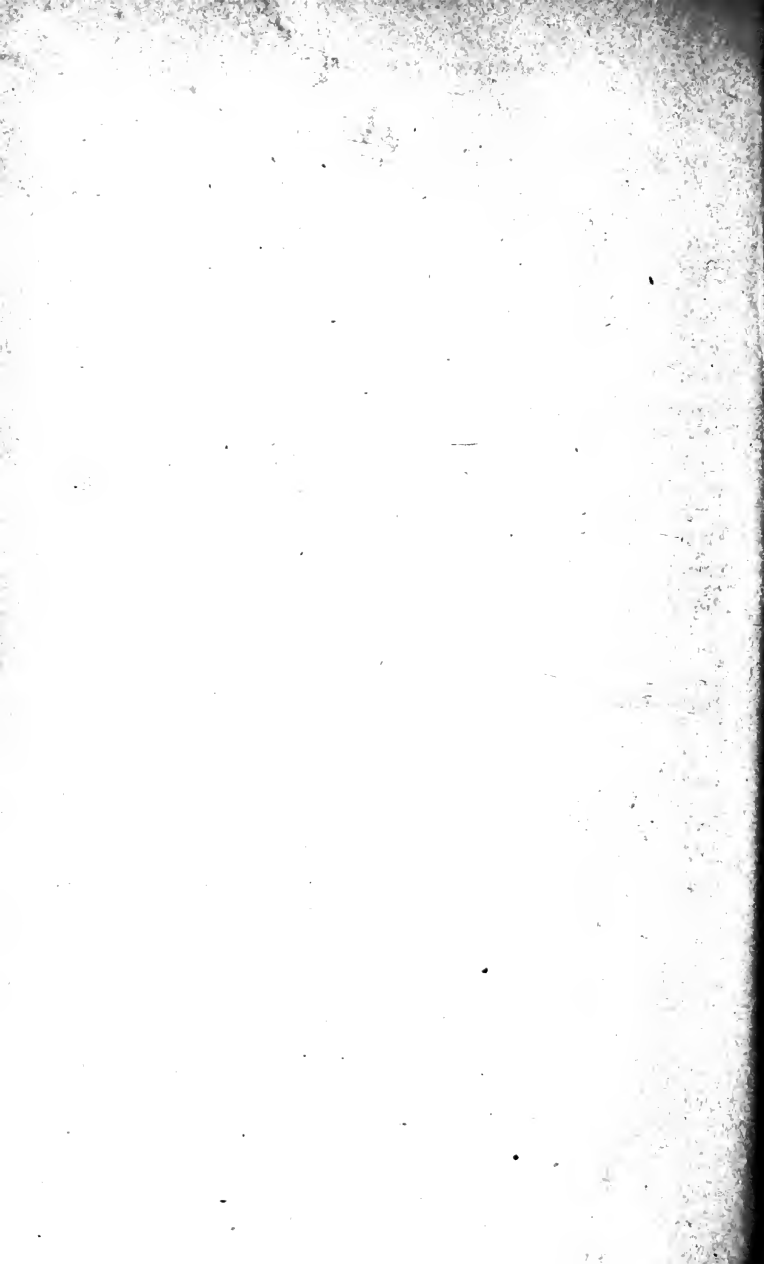
*Sir Rowland Hill's Force at the Battle of St Pierre, extracted from the original Morning State of 13th December 1813.*

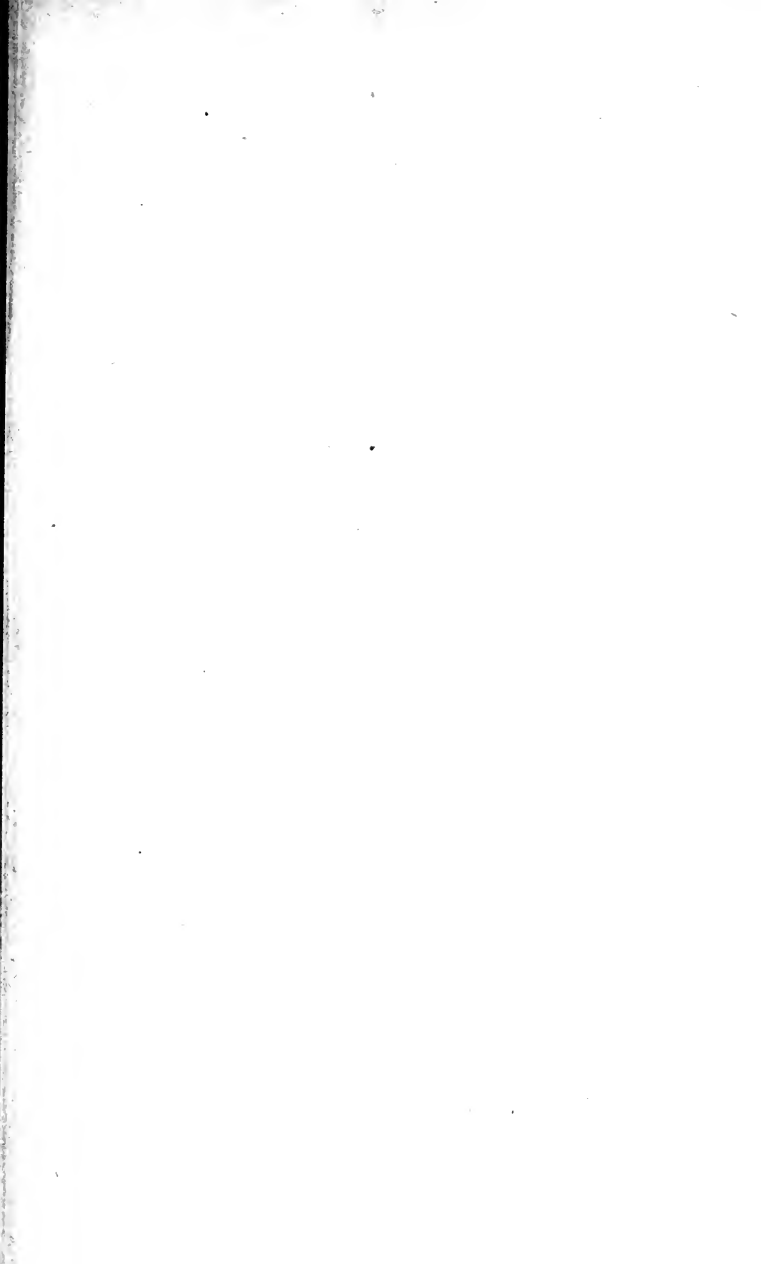
## SECOND DIVISION.

	Officers and Sergeants.	Rank and File.	Total.
British, - - - -	802	5,371	6,173
Portuguese, - - - -	277	2,331	2,608
Le Cor's Portuguese Division, -	507	4,163	4,670
Total under arms, exclusive } of Artillerymen,	1,586	11,865	13,451

—NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, vol. vi. p. 706.

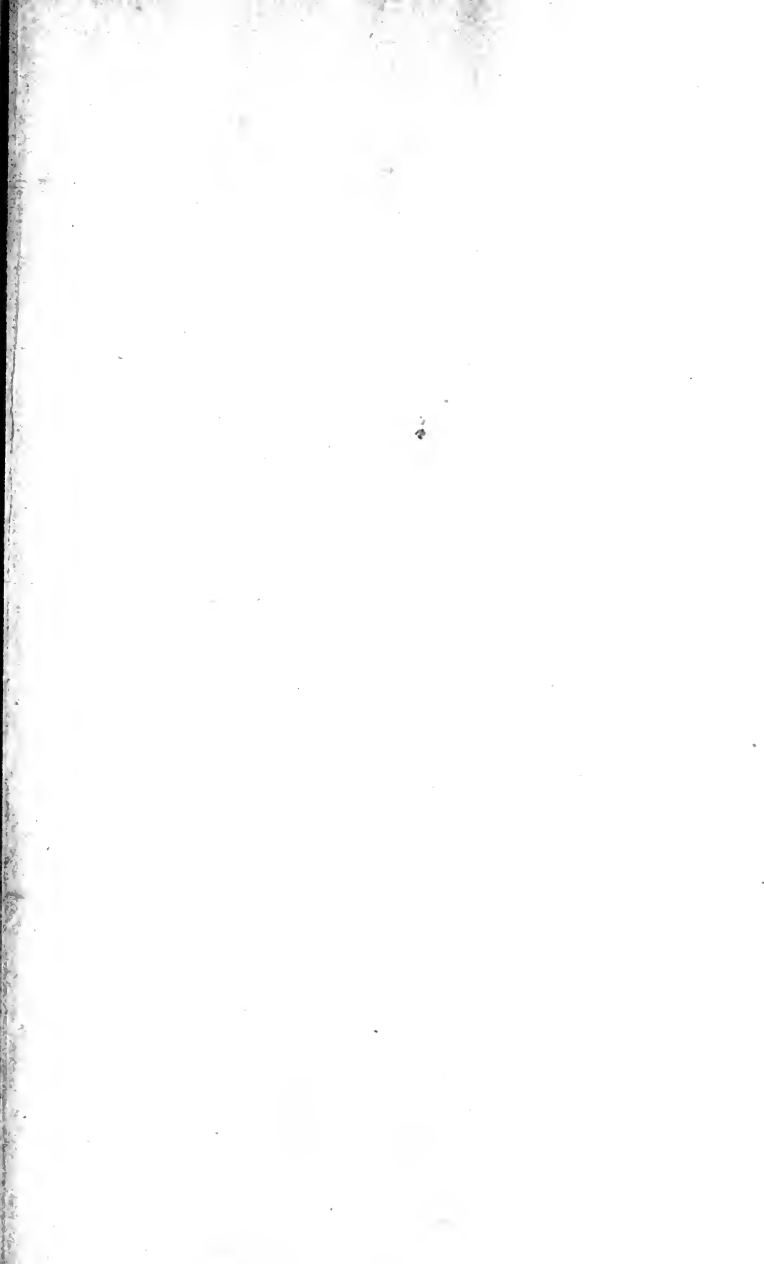














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